ORIENTAL WANDERINGS;

A

THE FORTUNES OF FELIX.

A Romance.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

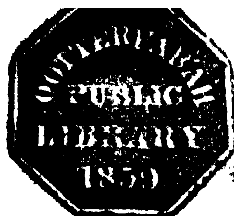
By T. E.

> ————Well, go to! take a vool's
> Counsel, and do not stand i' your own light:
> It may prove petter than you think for, look you.
> BEN JONSON'S *Tale of a Tub.*

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ORIENTAL WANDERINGS.

CHAPTER I.

Peace, undigested thoughts, down—down! till ripen'd
By future time, ye bloom
PAYNE'S *Brutus*.

THE dark, mysterious front of dire cabal, the frightful visage of fearful rebellion, had scarcely hid their heads, and the bright laurels of peace budded around the brows of Elmuton, caliph and viceroy of *Grand Cairo,* ere the cypress sprung up, to blast the pleasures, and choke enjoyments there. The Mamelukes had long been watched by the jealous eye of distrust, ere their plot had ripened to maturity, and burst with terror and confusion on the inhabi-

tants of that long-famed and ancient city of oriental pride, the seat once of eastern kings, the mart of golden commerce, neighbour to those piles of ambition, and wonder of the earth, the bulky pyramids. The gongs of Cairo's mosques, and the dying vibrations of rejoicing, had scarcely announced the glories of conquest, when the messengers of death appalled the parent's ear, and damped the joy of a loving people, with doleful tidings, that the youthful and beloved son of Elmuton, the prince Hamman, was mysteriously murdered; murder was the sound that struck each ear with astonishment—murder was the phrase that hung on each wondering citizen's tongue—murder was the knell which closed a day, whose morning brought tidings of peace restored, and held the fair mirror of tranquillity to the fond father, and a people happy. Yet not long had the darkened face of night assumed its sable mask, and given a holiday to tired Nature, or lulled the inmates of the busy city in calm repose, unknown of

late, made restless by the commotion of civil discord, and hackneyed by the bickerings of rebellious parties; the grand and holy mosque had closed its doors on evening prayers, and quietude seemed to hold her empire there; the watchman paced no more doubtfully, and in distrust of even his own vigilance, nor challenged, in surmise, the whistling breeze, or feared to breathe or tread, lest foes should mar his steps. The glimmering tapers from the many balconies, one by one, were disappearing, as their inmates, in confidence and peace, sought the soothing bliss of sleep. The sounds of revelry within the haram of Elmuton had died away, and music's fascinating voice no longer floated through the air, or played on the zephyr's wing: all was still, save the monotonous clang of the hollow gong, suspended on the "brazen platform," where the lofty barbican was fixed, to prove the city still was watched; or the rushing of the waters of the *Nile*, flowing (at this season) impetuous, and

eager to seek its bed—the ocean; or again, the nightly barking of the watch-dogs from the *quays of Bulac*, whose voices gave a double charge, as they resounded back in *echo* from the impregnable walls of the fortifications.

Thus was Cairo, when on a sudden the western passage-gate was summoned to admit about a score armed Mussulmen, whose jaded horses could with difficulty have further borne their heavy-accoutred riders. In breathless haste, they goaded on the beasts up the sudden acclivity to the caliph's castle; presently, the tinkling of a smaller gong announced to the disturbed inhabitants below they there had gained access; soon followed a commotion and extraordinary bustle; fleeting lights, in quick succession, passed the latticed windows of the palace; the torches on the ramparts darted a gleaming flow throughout the roscid atmosphere, causing a dimmed refulgence, sufficient to prove to the now-alarmed citizens, something of a sud-

den and appalling nature had again burst forth to disturb the short-lived tranquillity. Messengers, with hasty steps, were seen passing and repassing to and from the different officers' apartments in the castle, giving confirmation of some momentous event. Now was the buzzing silence made clamorous, by the brazen throats of seven clarions, summoning the caliph's officers to the viceregal presence.

At this drear hour, such sounds caused a sensation throughout the city and suburbs not to be described. The thrilling echo responded in the dark, narrow, and sandy streets, awakening, with terror, the numerous inhabitants. Now was each avenue, leading to the castle, thronged with an inquiring populace, catching at every half-dropped sentence of information, forming a thousand different and contradictory conclusions; yet still were all without the royal residence ignorant of the truth. Thus, in suspense, the tardy time crawled on; this space filled up with strange in-

quiries and vague replies; then the succeeding, in a breathless silence, some eyes would wander over the vast expanse of heaven, exploring the planetary system, as seeking for signs and wonders explanatory of the cause; while others firmly fixed on the brazen-studded gates, as with penetrating gaze, would pierce the portal, or ravish information from the walls.

Now a more cheering gleam illumes the ether vault; the sky-capped points of the pyramids, sparkling with the dews of night, seem as covered with a sheet of silver, made bright by the rising of the moon; the golden domes of the mosques and towering crescents, symbols of a proud, imperious faith, borrowing grandeur from lunar rays, giving a majestic glare to the ancient city, making, as it were, an imperial day in night—yes, as though awoke from a peaceful slumber by the keen inquiries of a troubled people, the heavenly lamp of night arose unclouded, as if partaking in the general anxiety of her terrene beholders.

It was midnight; the drear and hollow sounds had scarcely vibrated in the announcement, when the castle gates were thrown open, and presented the grand and holy mosque illuminated; yet illumed so, that light or darkness were scarcely separated: a chilling horror ran through the wondering multitude, as, slow and solemn, the great gong commanded the Mussulmen to prayers unusual, and the assurance of some event now filled each breast with terror: vague were the surmises, and horror sat in silence on each tongue; as, barefooted, the worshippers of Mahomet trod the sacred floor, the marble and golden arches of the lofty ceiling echoed awful and sepulchral murmuring.

On an elevated couch lay Elmuton, in all the woful melancholy majesty of grief; the pallid hue of dimly-burning lamps, devoid of their wonted fragrance—the walls, and chosen places, no longer bedecked with all the splendour and gaudy magnificence of Ottoman adoration—the ever-

burning censers, shadowed so, and veiled with the trappings of death, left no longer a doubt upon the public mind, but prepared each true Mussulman to arm his ear and heart for news of some dreadful national calamity. One part of the sacred edifice alone preserved its wonted glory. Beneath a splendid canopy, enriched with gems and golden spoils of victory, and bedecked with the invaluable gifts of earth and ocean, made brilliant with the never-fading lamps of purest gold, perpetually fed with the most refined oil; here was the *sanctum sanctorum* of the holy *Koran*, and *sacred sabre*, with the prophet's emblem, the *crescent*, sparkling in all the splendid hues of heaven's arched bow, and as, with awful, solemn, slow, and religious pace, the priests approached, offering their prostrations, throwing off the gaudy gear of rejoicing, and substituting the coarse, unseemly habiliment of mourning.

At the sight of this doing, no longer could the general feeling be repressed;

but an involuntary moan burst from the worshippers; sighs and lamentations re-echoed throughout the temple, and yet, unknowing of the true cause, grief reigned paramount. Anon the full impressive voice of the chief mufti called them back to themselves, to hear him declare appalling truths—truths unexpected—truths that were to fill the streets of Cairo with lamentation, and her people with horror and despair. Then followed a recital that shook Elmuton's inmost soul; yet, as the horrid facts again assailed his ears, did he become calm; but it was a calmness which seemed to fix him in death. Like a statue he sat, colourless his cheek, and steadfast stood his eye; unmoved he heard the repetition, which, when it first met his knowledge about an hour before, so overwhelmed him in affliction, that his mortal nature seemed to struggle—to waste herself in tears. But the first great trial was past; such contrariety of thought now pressed upon his

mind, the past, the present, and the future, each such a torrent gave, each passion so for mastery tried, that the outward man was vanquished and subdued. But a few short hours previous, from the same place, the same voice, the same divine, in all the holiness of thanksgiving, made his hearers' hearts glad with the cheering and welcome information, that peace again their city blessed. With fervency and gratitude were prayers, thanksgiving, and rejoicing, heard on every side; each countenance beamed with exultation, as the names of the victors were recorded in the proud book of fame—yes, so short the time since the dawning valour of the young prince Hamman, the pride of Cairo, and the people's love, was told—told were his first exploits, with transports that spoke a title-page, presaging his book of life would be made up of honour, valour, and courage! By Hamman were the rebellious Mamelukes once more humbled into insignificance, and bound with his chastisement—

by Hamman was peace wrested back to Elmuton and to Cairo—by Hamman were made quiet the people's homes; for Hamman, the beloved prince of the people, had the prayers of the day been offered, beseeching of Heaven to vouchsafe a lengthened life of happiness and fame. But ere the night had grown mature, was the cup of bliss overturned, and sighs and lamentations only heard for Hamman's death. Thus, at full, were the people made acquainted with this strange, unlooked-for catastrophe.

Sebastian, the chief officer of the caliph's army, was ordered to assemble his troopers, and crush a rebellious rising of the Mamelukes, who long had been in secret cabal, and had gathered fiercely on a plain, about two days march from Cairo's walls. Thither bent their course the chief flower of the city youth, led by the prince Hamman and Sebastian. Conquest gave laurels, and the first battle of the youthful leader was crowned with a glorious vic-

tory. The intelligence was hailed with enthusiasm; Sebastian claimed on praise for himself, but heaped encomiums on the caliph's son, and declared the success of the day was made complete, by the bravery and gallant bearing of the young prince alone. This added to the glories of the triumph and happiness of the caliph El-muton, and his people of Cairo, as the youthful leader had never before been intrusted with a command of so much consequence.

The fitful tide of battle and carnage past—the dreadful roar of contest was hushed—sighs and bewailing alone were heard on the ensanguined plain; the dying and the dead alike were mingled; labour and exertion had overcome the victorious survivors, as night had drawn her veil ere the fight had closed. Thus was the field of slaughter left only to a few, whose humanity rose superior to their weariness, and prompted assistance to their dying brethren and maimed fellows. This sad

task was soon performed; so hot and terrible had been the conflict, so complete the defeat of the rebels, that but few survived to bear the horrors and tortures of a Turkish renegado prisoner. No fond and heart-broken mother was here, to seek among the dead, to part the gory locks, or search the mangled corse, to find the secret mark that might confirm it was the remains of an only and tender-beloved son—no half-frantic widow here, with perishing infant at her breast, wading in a slough of blood, to grasp the cold bosom of a fallen father and husband; no, these were melancholy pleasures forbidden by the prophet's laws—no gleam of funereal torches flashed on the field, or darted through the air, to chase away the gloom of such a scene; no, the driven sands, accumulated by the driving winds, must form the rebel's grave, or the prowling beasts of prey banquet on their outlawed and putrid bodies, or carnivorous birds wing heavy through the air with their carious burthens, or the scorching sun,

as if blushing at such a sight, give fiercer rays, the sooner to consume.

But to the narrative. The past exertions of the day had compelled both officers and men of the caliph's army, to retire early to their tents. The first care of Sebastian was to send dispatches of the late exploits to Cairo, which reached early in the morning, and caused the rejoicing already spoken of. Sebastian, throughout the day, had shewn more attention to the young prince than even he was wont to do, and the caresses of both officers and men, clearly proved how dearly they loved the prince, and appreciated his worth. So jealous would Sebastian seem of his favour, and so watchful of his safety, that he proposed Hamman should that night have his pallet brought to his own tent, and there repose. It was done; the officers parted for the night—the watch was set, and all was now become hushed, save the distant howling of the hyenas, and such beasts of prey as the scent of blood attracted to the neighbourhood of the camp.

The night was passed in such a solemn silence, as the preceding day was likely to beget; all within the tents were lulled with the refreshing sleep of life—all without, save the cautious-given passwords of the sentinels, was still as the sleep of death. Morning streaked the heavens—the heavens reflected light upon the earth, and once more called creation into activity. The soldiers were beginning to stir, and the curtains of each tent was opened; its portal was filled by the devotees of Mahomet, bending towards the east, and making orisons to the common God of all. The tent of Sebastian alone was closed; an involuntary look passed from man to man; each glance conveyed an inquiry, as they would ask the guardsman if all within was safe. Presently issued a deep and heavy moan; aghast the hearers stood; yet ere their tongues could be fashioned to speak, was Sebastian seen rushing from the tent, in all the disorder of one whose soul felt agonies, that speech could not describe;

his look gave unintelligible meaning—his voice was choked—and, as a ghastly statue, fixed, he pointed to the tent, gave a death-like convulsive groan, and hid his face upon the ground.

Horror and amazement so filled the space around, so petrified each beholder, one, as waiting for the other, stood motionless; till the sentry, with his cimeter, drew aside the curtain, and shewed the melancholy scene: but it was a scene the pen cannot sufficiently describe—cannot, with horror, colour enough the imagination to portray a semblance. On a couch lay the once-beautiful and manly prince Hamman *dead*—dead, and sheeted in his crimson gore; his late well-set features, now drawn by a convulsion, that appalled the strongest fortitude to look upon; yet not disordered much his body; the left arm was thrown above his head; his fingers knit, and set in death with a stubborn grasp; his brow drawn lowering over his partly-opened eyes, his lips contracted, yet

extended so, as to shew the last effort of nature was a deep-fetched sigh, or smothered groan; in his left breast was sticking the deadly weapon—it was a frightful instrument, such as was carried in those days by the Mamelukes; four sharpened edges formed a blade about a span long, bearing a hilt, rough, and sufficiently large to give a powerful grip; so sure, so certain, was the fell stroke given, that the heart was nearly severed, giving life so sudden, so momentary a warning, that ere it quitted its earthly tabernacle of wo, surprised nature had not time to give her wonted throes in death.

For a few moments all was as silent as the sepulchre: some involuntarily pressed their hands upon their eyes, to shut out the ghastly view, as others, half bent, stood petrified and immoveable, gazing on the mysterious cause. Now Sebastian, as if recovered from a frightful and terrifying dream, stood amidst them, darting his full grey eyes, beneath brows, bending like

fearfully-charged thunder-clouds, when they hang over the shelterless and alarmed wanderer, giving such piercing and penetrating looks, deep into the countenance of each, filling with accumulating dread the astonished spectators, that, at the moment, might accusation have laid her hand on each, and pronounced "Thou art guilty!" Still, for a time, was each tongue mute: a scrutinizing taciturnity so occupied Sebastian, that, quick in succession as summer's lightning, the flashes of his rolling eyes seemed to penetrate their inmost souls. At length, drawing his tall figure erect, and, as he fain would damp his parched lips, with a scorching tongue thus he broke the awful stillness. —"Oh, murder! murder! sacrilegious murder!"

This ejaculation gave relief; sobs and sighs indescribable now rent the air; the less hackneyed in the rueful scenes of life, rushed into the open air to regain respiration, almost choked by the late dismaying

spectacle. Sebastian approached the body —hung over it awhile—then, as if some sudden confirmation had come across his mind, he vehemently drew from the deadly wound the fatal knife. This, with an arm extended above the level of his breast, he held, and pointing with his other hand, exclaimed—"This was the act of a damned Mameluke!" Thus speaking, he seemed to break the gloomy spell, and utterance gave relief to the many troubled bosoms. Who could do the accursed deed? —who steal, unobserved and unheard, within the tent, and secretly purloin the precious treasure? Curses and execrations were heaped on the head of the diabolical perpetrator. Where could suspicion be fixed?—who could surmise where so vile a demon lurked?—who could give even the faintest rays that might lead to the discovery?

Sebastian alone now seemed to shew the greatest fortitude; he thoughtfully pondered, pacing the tent, as if fixing in

resolves; then on a sudden commanded the guards, that had the care of the Mameluke prisoners, be summoned: it was done; from them were prompt and satisfactory assurances given, that from their dungeon no one had escaped, so closely were they guarded, and so heavy chained. Saldan, the name of the sentry who had the care of Sebastian's tent, was a proved and a loyal veteran; his word passed current, and it was believed. From him was each officer assured no living creature had, during the night, approached the tent; the murderer must have been secreted ere the watch was set, and, in the bustle and consternation of the morning, made his escape. Each feared to look his fellow in the face; a deathlike stupor followed. Sebastian paced the floor with a disordered gait; his bare and bony breast heaved in dreadful throes; an unusual pallid hue overspread his countenance, and, in fitful agitation, his nerves worked; the gnashing of his teeth bespoke his choler rising,

which so oft proved terrible ere it set: many had fallen victims under his accusations; so great his power and influence, none dared doubt or gainsay Sebastian.

Thus, as accused victims before an unrelenting judge, stood his auditors; hastily and in disorder he put his garments about him, commanding his followers to horse immediately. This was obeyed with alacrity; the camp was searched round, the outposts challenged as to the passers of the night; no clue could thus be gained; the skirts and the adjacent parts of the country were scoured, where it was likely to secrete aught that might lead to a discovery, and carefully explored. Half-smothered and dissatisfied mutterings escaped Sebastian, to the no small discomfiture of his dependents, who too often had been convinced, that where he had fixed a distrust, it seldom died away, but grew, by some means or other, to fatal conviction. Each officer was afraid to raise a surmise, or give his opinion, lest it should be con-

strued to an over zeal, that might end detrimental to his own peace, or perhaps fix suspicion on him enough to affect his life.

They returned, thus far, from their fruitless search. The day began to grow apace, and the attention of Sebastian was now drawn as to the best means of conveying the dreadful tidings to Elmuton: he asked not advice; that to him seemed a degradation to his rank; so long had he held supremacy of power, that next to the caliph was Sebastian hailed. The soldiers loved him for his bravery, and the success and good fortune ever attendant on his exploits; yet they feared him, for his strictness of discipline, and overbearing spirit, that governed a self-sufficient and uncontrolled disposition.

All was waiting attendance, and obedience to his look or nod: for a time he sat, with his brow rested on his palm, in sullen silence; then raising his eyes, and looking sorrowfully around, pathetically exclaimed —"It is me, it is me alone to blame! I

never more must see Elmuton! Who, who will take this heavy task from me—who bold enough to tell the father, and his people, of this dire mishap? Why did I sleep, and leave so precious a charge unprotected? Where can I hide me from the world's reproof?" This was something strange and unlooked for; so unexpected it broke upon the youthful warriors around them, that they, with something more than sympathy, looked on his great spirit fallen, and each would have sacrificed his life, to spare the pangs of their leader.—"Go, go!" cried Sebastian, in a faltering tone, "throw yourselves at the feet of your beloved ruler! tell him, if thou canst, the facts thou hast beheld of this black deed—tell him the once proud and stubborn Sebastian, now dare not meet him face to face—tell him it was for me the blow was directed! Yes, my companions, the midnight assassin has mistook his aim; unknowing what treasure and inestimable worth was within my tent,

the fell murderer, unconscious of the fraud, made a false prey, and left me, the most of all, to deplore the mistake. That I have been a chastening rod to your enemies, has long been proved—that my fame and honours, hardly earned in the field of glory, long has been a stumbling-block to jealous and cowardly knaves, who skulk at home, and gain some paltry preferment by fawning sycophancy; with such curs have I long been baited; but it was my honesty crushed their arrogance, and my master's discernment held me superior to their pettishness; now have their damned cunning, and hell-born plots, that were for ever to crush me, miscarried, and wofully cropped as fair a flower as ever bloomed, and plucked untimely the favourite bud of Cairo! It is hard to erase suspicion when once it has taken root; I do suspect—I cannot help it; but was I even to give the thought utterance, when it is yet so green, the object might be marred, and justice evaded."

At these words, Sebastian gave a half look, but so full of meaning, at Saldan, the sentry, that each eye caught the same object, and was felt so forcibly by the man, that the agitation of his countenance, at the sudden hint, confirmed the doubt. This however past, Sebastian took leave of about a score of his picked commanders, bidding them hasten to Cairo, and when night should fall, with an honourable escort, the royal and mutilated remains of the murdered prince should be forwarded to the city.

CHAPTER II.



——————Hear a little further,
And then I'll bring thee to the present business
Which now's upon us; without the which, this story
Were most impertinent. SHAKESPEARE.

ALL things and thoughts have their time, which certainly is a wise and grand dispensation. The season for public mourning, on account of the late distressing calamity, was of shorter duration than common in such cases, as the great festival and fete of *Ramadan*, a kind of Mahometan carnival, approached, and gave a different feature to the city: the days were certainly spent in fasting and prayers; but from sunset to its rising again, was all feasting and jollity. The cooling tide of night invited the inhabitants to partake pleasure and amusements, which the torrid heat, and over-

whelming sultry rays of day, rendered almost insupportable; the flashing gleams of illumination giving a thousand different colours to the atmosphere, the fanciful and whimsical devices of the transparencies, the many masked and absurd groupes perambulating the streets and squares, the clang and noisy exhibitions of jugglers, pantomimists, and serpent-eaters, with such like ridiculous spectacles, making the night as a busy and brilliant day, this being the season too for intrigue and adventures, that an European day would blush to look upon. These scenes however, as all others, passed away, and once more brought Cairo back to its wonted track of occupations.

The late extravagances had erased, in part, the remembrance of what so recently occurred. Elmuton had partly gained his usual laxity of disposition; although so fickle and variable his humours, the death of his son left a partial melancholy and restlessness, that rendered the situation of those most about his person irksome and

unpleasant. The harem had lost its usual attractions; and in vain would his old favourites employ each fascinating allurement to win him into cheerfulness. Monrod, an old and faithful officer of the castle, was now his chief companion; well he knew the various changes of the caliph's temper, and could make his theme suit his fitful mood; and such an ascendency too had this honest servant over his master, that he would utter truths, or give an opinion, that none else would presume to do, at the hazard of his life.

Elmuton, by all his mistresses, had had but two sons, Hamman and Felix; Hamman was his favourite, now, alas! no more; Felix had been for some time banished from the presence of his father and the court, wandering an outcast, unsought for, uninquired after, yet still, by many persons in power, was he remembered with solicitude, and, when they dared, spoken of with love and affection. The many could only surmise why he was thus dis-

carded; Monrod alone seemed able to penetrate the veil of mystery, and often would hint to the father the necessity and justice of seeking and again recalling the involuntary fugitive, to fill the sad vacuum they now deplored; but it was a dangerous theme to broach; such a fatal antipathy had been rooted in Elmuton's mind—such a tempest would rise in his breast at the bare mention of his name, which all seemed fearful to awake, lest it should prove terrible ere it could subside, so stubborn run the current of the caliph's temper, that even the honesty of Monrod would seldom attempt to allay it, by openly making known the public opinion, and shewing the stigma attendant on the sire.

Sebastian too had not yet been to Cairo, though so short the distance from the city, and so long the time since the rebellion had been crushed; yet some subterfuge was found for his absence; illness, or a lack of spirits to meet Elmuton, and join in the festive scenes, were excuses, that came i

so supplicating a manner, that they were received by the caliph, and by him deplored. At length it was announced, that on the morrow, Sebastian would march into the city, with the Mameluke prisoners, to be disposed of as Elmuton in his judgment should think proper. This again was something strange, as Sebastian seldom gave himself much trouble on that head: to be a captive in the hands of Sebastian, and hateful to the caliph, was cause sufficient; seldom was execution stayed then.

As Monrod was meditating over the past events, and conjuring up inventions for something new, to divert the attention of Elmuton, that, ere Sebastian should arrive, he might accomplish the object he had most at heart, that of calling back the young prince Felix to favour and power; but this Monrod knew would be impossible to be done without Elmuton's mind was divided, or diverted with some new occurrence; while thus he sat pondering

in one of the outer courts of the castle, contrary thoughts occupying his mind, he was disturbed by the shuffling and self-important gait of Tabel, the chief eunuch of the harem guard, a peculiar dwarf, ugly even to forbidding; and though accounted a privileged fool by those higher in office, yet such was his cunning and address, when he could gain by it, or serve those whom he loved, that Tabel was often sought after, and addressed with titles, that gave him an importance, which his appearance demanded not. Monrod knew, by his manner, he had something pleasing to communicate; as he drew near the mat on which he was sitting, he threw his preposterous turban back off his forehead, if a forehead he might be said to have; for his eyes stood almost on a level with the top of his head; the disease, so common in this country, had often severely attacked the ocular organs; hair had long since ceased to be an inhabitant there, and so contracted were his eyelids, and so scarified

with repeated operations, that the visual organs were scarce perceptible; a flat indented nose obtruded itself, and rested on an upper lip, of most uncommon dimensions; his mouth occupied nearly the half circumference of a large head, with long, monstrous ears at the extremity; this seeming cumbrous member rested on a pair of high shoulders, with a protrusion of the back and breast; the remaining part of his body was fashioned after the same manner, making a pile, of hardly to be called human mortality, about three feet four inches high. With many distortions of his body, which he meant as salutations to Monrod, and taking from his mouth the end of an enormous tobacco-pipe, which was twisted in about a dozen coils around his arm, he attempted to draw his form erect, and place himself in an attitude for speech; unfortunately, at this moment, a violent fit of sneezing seized him, the exertion of which threw his turban from his bare head, and made him

look the oddest being in creation. This was too much even for the sobriety of Monrod's features, a laugh escaped from him, to the no small discomfiture of the little great man.

For a moment, Tabel bit his lips in anger; but as he had ever shewn a peculiar respect for Monrod, he soon composed his choler and his clothes also; then fidgeting backwards and forwards a few times, as though he had a sudden fit of the cholic, or his slippers filled with red hot pease, he thus began his harangue.—"Revered Monrod! the blessing of the prophet rest on your reverend beard! The times—the times of late have hung heavy and dark upon us, Monrod; but if I can foretell, or see as clearly into events as I ever have done, this gloom will shortly pass away, and we shall have a lengthened time of sunshine to our spirits, and happiness to our lives."

"Amen!" sighed Monrod. "I wish, good Tabel, thou mayest prove a true prophet."

"Our master, God bless him!" replied Tabel, "has not consulted me of late, as he was wont to do; but I am not unmindful of his pleasures and comforts; well is Elmuton assured I have his welfare at heart. This—this has been a busy morn- with me, seignior Monrod; three hours have I been toiling and moiling, in the heat of the sun, among those mercenary Christians—have done but little to my own profit to-day; but it is impossible to say to what account it may turn."

"I believe, Tabel," said Monrod, "you seldom visit the market or quays of Bulac without gaining a *something*. But what hast thou done this morning, beside what thou gettest in the ordinary way, when thou goest to the quays, or spirit-cellars—parts so little frequented by true Mussulmen, the dealings there being chiefly in commodities that are forbidden* by our prophet's laws?"

"True, true, good Monrod," answered Tabel; "what these Christians make use

of as common beverage, the Mahometans only dare use as medicine. I have a *strange infirmity* hanging on me, that requires the aid of spirituous liquors to be taken occasionally; but however repugnant it is to my faith and conscience, necessity—necessity is the only inducement that actuates me, good Monrod: but of this no more. It is a great pity," continued the chatterer, very significantly, and taking his seat on the mat by the side of Monrod, as standing was evidently too great and unpleasant an exertion for a man of his consequence, who had *done* so much in one morning—" yes," he resumed, " it is a pity Elmuton will not listen to my advice, and seek some new recreation to divert his melancholy thoughts. Public business is so much at a stand-still, he in it can find but little occupation; if some new favourite now would start up—some new mistress to divide his thoughts, we might labour to advantage, and our revels assume their usual gaiety."

"It is thy peculiar province, Tabel," answered Monrod, who, by this time, began to imagine he had something to disclose, "to procure food for thy master's love and pleasures; I think thou hast, of late, been unmindful of thy duty."

"Dost thou think so, indeed?" said the little purveyor of the harem, drawing his face into what he supposed to be a smile pregnant with meaning—"dost thou think so?—No, no, when Tabel neglects his duty, then may honest Monrod find fault. I have such a treasure now within the harem, that I promise myself shall profit me this pouch full of good gold pieces."

These were sounds most pleasant to the ears of Monrod, and, in part, lightened his heart of a heavy burthen; but so well he knew his man, he durst not ask his full meaning at once, therefore carelessly replied—"Thou art ever lucky, valiant Tabel."

"Yes, yes," answered the knight of the ladies, "if it had been so fortunate as the

prince Hamman to have returned alive, with all his honours on his head, thou mightest have called me lucky indeed; but that is miscarried, so must make the best bargain I can. I would not mind now giving my gold cimeter, if Elmuton would recall the young prince Felix; I think I could take it upon me to say, he never more should run after Christian wenches again."

This was the touchstone for Monrod, and scarcely could he help betraying his emotion at the bare recital of a name so dear to him; he therefore contented himself by saying—"If thou couldst make this appear to the caliph, perhaps he might consent to the reestablishment of his banished son."

"Make it appear!" said Tabel, "the thing shall appear for itself. You must know, being on the quay the other morning, in conversation with some wealthy merchants and people of consequence, who were asking my opinion and advice on di-

vers matters, my attention was attracted by a sale of slaves, that were just unshipped, and lately arrived from the Philippines. Conrod, our garden-keeper, had made some purchases of males from the same cargo; one a fine, handsome-looking fellow, whom they reported was of consequence in his own country, became refractory; but however, the bastinado soon made him sensible of his present situation, and he silently submitted to his new master. A crowd was collected round a female, who was making piteous bewailing at her change of condition; her appearance struck me, for she is beautiful beyond a compeer—rather too dark; but when she has undergone the discipline of the harem a short time, and been secluded from the sultry rays of the sun, her complexion will be exquisite; I therefore purchased her at a venture, and she is now under the care and tuition of the good mistress Ayesha, governess of the caliph's ladies."

"Thou hast done well in this indeed, Tabel," said Monrod, cautiously; "the reward from thy master will be great; just at this time too, when his mind is so perplexed with despondency, this acquisition will come most opportunely."

"Think not so," answered Tabel; "I have a more profitable market for her."

"What," replied Monrod, somewhat warmly, "art thou mad? Dost thou think, when Elmuton shall hear that thou hast disposed of such a jewel to another, he will tamely bear the loss? I would not have thee think so. If thou pursuest this course, ere another week shall pass over our heads, I shall see thee hang dangling in the air, at the topmost pinnacle of the seraglio, food for birds of prey. What, hast thou taken leave of thy good senses, to act so barefaced a treason?"

This much discomposed the little man; his lip dropped, and covered his chin, his face became pale, and a tremour took possession of his whole frame. Luckily, at

this moment, a contrary subject occurred, to rouse what little of the man was left in him.

Old Ayesha, the governess of the harem, was seen waddling across the court, toward where they were sitting. An agitation filled out the ugly wrinkles of her face, and swelled it into a form, that spoke she had something of importance to communicate. Tabel's pigmy eyes caught her on the instant; his mouth pouted with surprise, and, with all the activity he was master of, sprung upon his legs to meet her in her errand.—"My dear, good Tabel," said Ayesha, spluttering, as though her mouth was full of scalding ragout, and giving her whole frame action to her words, "prepare thy utmost invention—summon all thy cunning to thy aid, for Elmuton has discovered Zoa, your beautiful slave, and has fallen desperately in love with her at first sight. Fortunately, he asked me not how she hither came, but addressed her with all the courtesy of an

affectionate friend; spoke so kindly—proffered his friendship in such terms, that I became almost distracted at his condescension."

"Thou hell-born beldam!" vociferated this deformed apology of a man, his cheeks reddening at the time, as though they would cause a combustion that should annihilate his fiery-tempered frame, "what hast thou done—what hast thou done, thou mother of fools? Did I not bid thee keep her from the sight of that amorous old goat? Oh! here is profit enough lost, that should have purchased half Cairo! Have I not been seeking night and day, high and low, for the discarded prince Felix, that I might get him reinstated, then sell him this wench for his first mistress? and now that I have found him, and got him secreted, with so much ingenuity, in the castle here, till an opportunity shall fit, that I might gain him his father's forgiveness, which I had planned, and brought so near to maturity, when thou, thou old har-

ridan, must be meddling, to blast my hopes of profit and preferment!"

These words, for a moment, rivetted Monrod to his seat; his dearest hopes so flushed upon his heart, his speech could not find utterance. At length, taking Tabel by the hand, bade him beware what he said, and recollect the public situation they now stood in: this calmed both parties. They then retired to a more secluded part. The time this occupied, served to reinstate their perturbed spirits, and consult on the best means of settling an affair, likely to end in the discomfiture of one, or more, concerned in it. Monrod was made counsellor and adviser. He strictly enjoined secrecy to be observed by Ayesha, and threatened the most fatal consequences, in case she divulged aught that had fallen from Tabel. She then retired to the duties of her occupation, and left Monrod to turn the little ugly pimp to his own account, the best likely to end in his wishes.

He then advised the little frightful figure to hence immediately to Elmuton, and endeavour to make him believe he intended Zoa to be presented to him, as soon as his spirits would allow, and she had been initiated into customs more congenial to the taste of the caliph; this, he said, would save him from all appearances of fraud, and hold him blameless.

This plan so pleased the distorted lump, and so tickled his fancy, he quite leaped for joy, and danced like a baboon in hot ashes.

The next consideration was, what was to be done with Felix? The strings of fear that had tied Tabel's tongue being now partly cut, he would have chattered for a whole day, and proposed a thousand ridiculous schemes in succession; but Monrod held the staff, and he was determined to be heard. He then desired to be led to Felix, and there remain undisturbed, until the caliph had taken his midday meal; in the mean time, Tabel and Ayesha

should so dispose of Zoa in the balcony, or shaded walk, opposite to where Elmuton should be, that he might occasionally have her in his sight; and when the caliph had retired after his refreshment, then should Monrod join him, for the usual recreation of chess, or conversation, in the golden *lattice*.

This was a kind of pavilion, shaded with the most choice exotics, where Elmuton used to retire, and accessible only to a few of his most particular friends and favourites; one side was impervious nearly, by the interwoven branches, leaving an almost imperceptible passage. Here he commanded Tabel to attend, in secret, with the young prince; that in case opportunity should offer, he might be at hand, and thus surprise the father into forgiveness.

This plan seemed to please Tabel well. They were about to retire, when the city gongs announced the hour of noon: this struck like a knell upon their ears, so little did they imagine the day had worn so

fast away; and, as a further perplexity, Nulak, another of the castle officers, summoned Monrod immediately to the presence of Elmuton. What was now to be done? all must be left to the direction of Tabel; yet he was a dangerous conductor of a business of so much importance; not that his cunning would fail perhaps, but, somehow or other, his tongue, which was none of the smallest, seemed hung rather preternatural, and was continually going, except when the oratorical powers were suspended, for the purpose of moistening it, with the contents of a flat leather bottle, which he seldom missed to carry in his waistband; therefore Monrod had only the opportunity to give him a look at parting, the meaning of which it was impossible for him to misunderstand, accompanied with this short sentence only—"Tabel, do your duty."

The dwarf replied, with a bow almost to the ground, which had nigh proved fatal to his equilibrium—"Revered seignior Monrod, doubt me not."

Monrod now retired, for the purpose of attending the caliph, with a bosom overflowing with emotions and contending passions. Tabel, casting an eye cautiously around, to see if he was observed, found it necessary to have recourse to his bottle, being the only recipe, however repugnant to his faith and conscience, for the strange infirmity he had the misfortune to labour under. As the neck of the flask approached to salute his lips, he suddenly turned from the *east*, as if determined to cheat Mahomet, and taking two or three hasty gulps, replaced the vessel in its *sanctum sanctorum*. Pulling his slippers now above his heels, and snuffing a copious portion of highly-scented snuff, he proceeded to shake the dust out of the bowl of his pipe, which was of carved ivory, and beautifully inlaid with gold, forming a sphinx of exquisite workmanship; then replenishing it with tobacco, strongly impregnated with opium, he implored the aid of Horus, and, with the assistance of

a strong magnifier, soon produced the delightful effusion; so, like a being of another world, took his departure in a cloud.

During a space of about three hours, the young prince Felix had undergone the most painful sensations. Tabel had secreted him in a kind of cage, a sort of strong room, built on the outer wall of the harem, and used as a place of restriction for petty offenders, such as came under the immediate jurisdiction of the chief eunuch. Although some weeks had now passed since he was banished from the city, still it was guessed, by those who cherished a love and sincere regard for him, that he lingered in the suburbs and vicinity; by some too it was known he had a strong attachment to the family of a wealthy Christian merchant, named Selinus, which was surmised to be the sum and substance of his offending, and for which his father, the caliph, had discarded him. Be that as it would, it was the decree of an obstinate and yet a fickle sire,

and treason for a subject to endeavour to disannul.

Tabel, with all his faults, follies, or imperfections, had many good qualities to set his bad ones off. First, he never forgot to repay a service done him, when an opportunity should offer to cancel the debt; nor was he extortionate or overbearing to his inferiors in office, unless it should come under the head of trade, then profit—profit was Tabel's grand object. In his callings, he had much to do in the markets of Cairo, consequently the traders, in whatsoever way, were known to him. The two young princes, Hamman and Felix, he was most tenderly attached to; he had been, as may be said, their plaything from their earliest infancy, and as they grew to manhood, he profited considerably by their follies and extravagancies. He, from the first moment of Felix's banishment, never lost sight of him more than a day and night at one time; but although his head would have answered for his temerity

if he had succoured him, still would he, through the medium of a Christian, render him much assistance, without even the befriended knowing who was his benefactor.

Tabel, like most other people about Elmuton, was afraid of Sebastian; his austere, harsh, and mysterious manners, made him avoided, as much as possible, by people in subjection to him; even the caliph was completely governed by him; but now that he was away, and the prince Hamman no more, Tabel thought the present a fit opportunity for getting Felix recalled, not only for his own gratification, but it being also the wish of most of those in power, who felt conscious the father's ear was abused, and the son injured.

With this intent, had the little nondescript been earlier than usual on the look-out, and had discovered Felix in disguise, among the crowds of different nations, assembled on the quays of Bulac, the place where the chief mercantile transactions of Cairo were carried on. Tabel was a long

time before he could make an opportunity to speak with his late *protégé*, as Felix had evidently seen him, and was carefully avoiding an interview; but however the dwarf's eyes had caught him, and he might now almost as well have tried to evade the pursuit of a bloodhound, when once he had been put full upon his track. At length he yielded, and was persuaded to accompany his old playfellow to the castle, as he had something to communicate to him, and might rely on the vigilance of his conductor that no harm should befall him. The little man of consequence had made him secure, and was seeking for Monrod, to be his coadjutor in the business, when he was fortunate enough to find the object of his search, as before mentioned. Why he did not at once let Monrod know his errand was, not only to shew his own importance, but also to magnify the transaction in the eyes of the old soldier, as he did not mean the meeting between the father and son should take place until the evening.

CHAPTER III.

Wan was her cheek; and blanch'd with care,
The rose that once had revell'd there;
And dim the lustre of her eyes,
Where still the frequent tear would rise:
For few by disappointment pain'd,
The bitter cup had deeper drain'd.

CHARLOTTE C. RICHARDSON'S *Ludolph.*

MONROD was much surprised, as he drew near the apartments of the caliph, to find an unusual bustle there; the doors were guarded as in the time of revelling, and music was heard within the harem. Such a sudden aspect bore the face of things, he could scarce believe his senses. The morning had dawned, gloomy as they had done for some time past; even the gay season of the Ramadan had passed over in the palace, with as little pomp and gaiety as possible, owing to the despondency

caused by so lamentable a circumstance as the untimely death of the beloved prince. No wonder then, such a sudden transition should create a surprise. Formerly it caused no astonishment, as the capricious humours of Elmuton's mind were as changeable as the hues of the cameleon.

Monrod had been missing since early in the morning, therefore the duties of his office had been filled by the next in command: indeed, with such haste were the caliph's orders given, for officers of all distinction to attend, and so totally unexpected by them, that the viceroy's retinue appeared to be but half complete.

Monrod's questions, as to the meaning of all these things, were answered, that the caliph was entertaining a new female favourite; he therefore joined in his occupation, with a heart somewhat gladdened, in the confirmation of old Ayesha's report. Indeed, it is to be presumed, all the particulars of this new adventure would have been communicated by that lady, had it

not been for the passionate and vehement attack, made so unceremoniously by Tabel. The torrent of abuse bestowed on the old governante, by this little neither he nor she thing in power, had quite upset her reasoning faculties, as to whys or wherefores; she therefore gladly made her escape, without entering into all the *et cæteras* attending such a circumstance.

Tabel, as passing to the abode of Felix, heard what was going on within the harem. This was too much. What—any thing new or particular transpiring, and he, the major-domo, not made acquainted with it? impossible! However, it must be looked into; his consequence was at stake; that was quite spur sufficient to accelerate his motions. He had some distance to go, so complex are the eastern buildings for the Ottoman despots, with intricate windings, round, square, and octagon courts, flights of steps, narrow passages, &c. &c.

The little officer found himself rather in an unpleasant heat, when he arrived at the next chamber to the presence. After learning some particulars, and rinsing his head, face, neck, and hands, in a large sculptured white marble bowl of strongly-perfumed water, he attired himself in his robe of office, which was a pelisse of fine quilted yellow silk, profusely wrought with gold and silver, drawn close at the bottom of the back, and reaching to the ground, a turban to match, with a rich heron plume, and a large crescent, gorgeously sparkling with gems; a massive gold cimeter he held across his breast, the scabbard of which was suspended at his side by a heavy gold chain, dragging on the ground, and making a rattling, to terrify the by-standers, not much unlike an English life-guardsman, when on duty in the vicinity of a meeting of Radicals.

Thus accoutred, he sneaked into the presence, like a boy who had skulked beyond his school-hour. Here he found El-

muton, surrounded by his eunuch guards, seated on a splendid ottoman, with the beautiful Zoa at his side.

It appears Ayesha had taken her charge to the baths, contrary to Tabel's orders, and, on her return, had unexpectedly encountered the caliph, who was immediately smitten with her appearance. Ayesha had not yet overcome the scruples of her new-made victim, so as to prevail on her to adopt the manners, customs, and habiliments of the harem; therefore she was something entirely new to Elmuton, and the more likely to captivate him. Her flowing, jetty hair, hung in ringlets, to her waist, parted over a forehead of the finest cast; her complexion was a brunette, her figure commanding, and her mien majestic. Her loose robe, that enveloped her form, hung somewhat disordered, owing to the rough treatment she had lately been forced to endure; the sad thoughts that filled her mind, on the change of her situation; torn from those

her soul so fondly loved, separated from her dearest ties of nature and affection, lost, for ever, to her native land and home—all these thoughts, borne without the outward shew, and excess of lamentations, gave her countenance the contour of sublimity, and abashed the rude gaze of idle curiosity.

Elmuton saw, and loved her; he led her, with kind courtesy, to the octagon saloon, the place where he used to take his noon refreshments, and be diverted with various entertainments. Here fountains of different-coloured waters played on every side, impregnating the surrounding air with sweet fragrance, rendering the abode cool and refreshing—here the fascinating sounds of soft, love-creating music, were heard, while the performers were screened from the eye by thin transparencies, emblematic of the softer passions. On the floor tripped dancing girls, on the light fantastic toe, and, by turns, the buffoon eunuch dwarfs distorted the risible

features, by their ridiculous foolery. Choice viands and sweetmeats were presented in profusion, to tempt the appetite. Still was Zoa, unmoved by all, reserved; yet gracefully she acknowledged the attentions of the caliph. The ladies of the harem passed and repassed, in all the gaudy pomp of the east, making their salutations to the caliph, who seemed insensible to all save Zoa.

At length, Elmuton, not wishing to render himself obnoxious by over assiduousness, with many respectful caresses, resigned the beautiful stranger to the care of Ayesha; then dismissing his attendants and women to the seclusion of the harem, the doors were thrown open, for the admittance of those who were not permitted further than the antichamber, during the private amusements of their master.

Monrod was the first to enter; for more reasons than one, he was well aware he should be summoned to attend Elmuton, for his more secluded recreations; he

therefore wished, once more, to give Tabel a hint on the momentous matter they had in contemplation. As the caliph retired, he gave a signal to Monrod to follow; this, however, the old soldier pretended not to observe, as he had not yet been able to encounter the great man of the dwarfs.

As the viceroy had now withdrawn, the numerous assemblage began to disperse. Monrod's agitation was so great, he was totally unfit for the task he had assigned himself, and also for the presence of his master. While he was thus meditating an excuse, or despairing of the scheme he had so dearly cherished, his eyes caught one being, who gave him great uneasiness; in a corner of the saloon lay the brandy-tippling Tabel, fast wrapped in the arms of Morpheus; and now, that the place had become hushed from the clamour attendant on a crowded room, the tones of his nasal organs vibrated to the very roof, and sounded doleful discord. This was too much for the bearing of Monrod; he, in a

city begins to stir at this long apathy, and each rude faction may look with boldness up."

To which Elmuton replied—"Alas, good Monrod! the people's idol, and my soul's proudest hope, both—both at once destroyed—and true, as thou sayest, mysteriously!—Oh, holy prophet, avenge so black a deed!—But, tell me, can busy conjecture no one point out, who thus with sorrow filled our cup so full? What means thy silence? Come, old honesty, thy bluntness, that hath so often given offence to mine ear, now let passage have, most free thy tongue uncurb, and let me hear the world's worst saying?"

"The world," answered Monrod—"the world's only saying, is murder—a black, a damned murder! but, on the morrow, *your* friend Sebastian will return to you; may he answer more! It was Sebastian had this sacred charge—let him account. Beneath his tent he slept, so careful was he; no task, though never so mean, but for him would he perform."

Elmuton answered to this sarcasm rather warmly—"Monrod, thou likest not Sebastian—but I would have thee believe him honest, for honest I am sure he is; in all his counsels he has been most just, and in state will I henceforward hold him as my second self."

This somewhat staggered the old veteran; but still he was not subdued: to speak now what his private sentiments were, would only tend to mar his project; he therefore became mute on that head, and, with tears of sincerity, deplored the loss of a successor in a direct line. The caliph sighed, and sat pensive. The time was wasting, and Monrod now determined, at all risks, to mention the calling back of the prince Felix; therefore, as a pretext, inquired when the viceroy would hold a court, as the citizens had a prayer of much importance to lay at his feet.

Elmuton inquired, in a careless manner, if he knew its purport?

Monrad answered in the affirmative,

but hesitating, purposely to raise an anxiety, which the caliph perceiving, commanded him at once to speak.

"If you command," was the reply, "it is my duty to obey, whatever chance I run to gain your anger. It is," said he, "the public wish, that you should call the prince Felix back to the honours due to him. His mind is gentle, and his virtues tried; your true son, and worthy such a father."

Here Elmuton darted a look of unutterable fury on Monrod; his eyes, flashing vengeance, he fixed frightfully on his officer; starting from his half-reclining posture, he griped his dagger, as if preparing to plunge it in the breast of Monrod, who instantly bared his bosom, and exclaimed—"Strike! strike! Old honesty is weary of his burthen; and now that my last words were truth, send me quickly to the heaven of all perfection, lest I longer live to blush at thy ingratitude. I fear thee not, Elmuton," he continued;

"thou hast commanded me to speak, therefore shall not complain of disobedience. I repeat, in the name of the prophet, by the holy reverence of his beard, I declare to thy face, thou doest wrong to Felix. Elmuton, I have served ye long and faithfully, bled for ye, prayed for ye—and rather would I this old heart should be taken piecemeal from this withered trunk, and scattered to the many winds, than I would live to see the finger of scorn point at ye, and cry, fie, fie upon ye!"

This strong asseveration of love and duty petrified the caliph; he gazed, his lips extended, and arm uplifted, and, as a fearful statue fixed, he remained motionless.

Monrod followed up his attack.—"I pity thee," he cried—"I pity thee, from my soul; by all my hopes of hereafter, I pity thee, Elmuton! thy heart, and all thy senses, have been abused; some devil—some incarnate monster, has poisoned thy better self—ruined thy son—and left thee,

a lasting memento of shame, for after ages to blush at."

"Oh, prophet of my fathers!" exclaimed the caliph, "torture me not thus; have I not cause enough to hate the boy Felix? has he not even stepped in between my arm and justice? has he not often assuaged my wrath, so held me up as the monument of scorn and mockery?"

"Never, never," said Monrod; "never, but as you have been *told*. Walk through Cairo's streets, and hear the prayers for his welfare, and lamentations for his mishap; behold the many that are living happy, a blessing to their offspring, that long ere this, had it not been for *Felix*, would have fallen beneath the anger of thy judgment, when petulance and fraud have abused thy councils. You do the boy much wrong, to hold him thus; his heart to mercy ever was awake; I have known in him such deeds as angels would approve, and all good men applaud."

"Has he not," said Elmuton, almost

choking with contrary emotions—"has he not revelled with Christians?—mixed with my direst hate, and disregarded my decrees?—been absent when hooded treachery lurked about our streets, and mysterious meetings filled each true and loyal Mussulman with fear and doubt, so stamped distrust upon his very front and bearing?"

"So thy ears have been filled," replied Monrod.—"Oh, calumny! thou bane of society!

Calumny, the darkest work of hell—
The masterpiece of Hecate's damned art,
Whoe'er so fair shall miss its poison'd shaft?
In devils' dugs the venom is imbu'd,
And none but impious fiends direct the bolt.
I knew a man, so good, to most men's views,
That all his neighbours would hold him honest.
A friend he serv'd, and with good worldly care,
And many weighty favours, held him debtor.
But on some weak pretence, this friend turn'd foe,
And with subtle inuendos dropt,
And poison'd hints, charg'd well the gossip's ear;
Then, with surmises dark and distant,
Thus, with scandal, held his conversation—
'Tis sad, 'tis pity; I hear 'tis so and so;

'Tis true, I think; yet, stay; we may hear more.
I wish I could not think on't; he was my friend;
But heed it not, nor let it further pass'
Thus, like a villain, did he stab his friend,
And left him, like the hapless, wounded *deer*,
Amidst his fellows, pitiless, to fall."

Elmuton stood, as pondering, and answered not; when Monrod continued thus—

"Tis no matter; man, in whatsoever state,
Will find the world to be the world in all;
To-day, like a fair flow'r, with fragrance sweet,
Its beauty captivates, its power charms,
And each beholder wonders at the work;
A dark and stormy night, unlook'd for, comes,
Destroys the sweetness, and the blossom blights;
To-morrow sees it, disregarded, spurn'd,
Or gather'd by some plebeian hand
To heat the pottage for a beggar's dish."

"What wouldst thou insinuate?" replied Elmuton, sarcastically; "has he not been watched, and secretly discovered hordeing with Christians? Has he not eat, drank, laughed, and perhaps worshipped with them? Has he not even sued me to wed one of their fair-looking devils?

Wouldst thou have me mingle my own blood with recreant dogs in holy wedlock?"

"That he loved the fair Christian maid, the merchant's daughter, I believe," said Monrod; "but you do forget the amorous blood of youth, who, when beauty captivates the senses, too often forgets the path of rectitude, and sees no danger, until the object is won. But was that a fault of magnitude sufficient that you should banish him for ever from your heart, his home, and all that is dear, to wander as a vagabond beggar, and an outcast?—to seek his bread among your enemies?—to ask charity of those you hate? Is it becoming the dignity of the great *caliph of Cairo*? By the prophet's shade, the shame is on thy head, Elmuton, and the triumph thine enemy's!"

Here Elmuton's head dropped on his bosom; a tear glistened in his long, thick eyelashes, struggling to be released.

Monrod's heart palpitated; he looked

around, and saw not Tabel nor Felix; he was approaching towards his master, for the purpose of taking his hand, and falling on his knees, humbly to solicit one short interview for his outcast, wandering son, in case he should be found, when, just at the critical moment, a sudden fall and most discordant noise was heard at hand.

Tabel had been watching and dodging for a fit opportunity to let Monrod know of his punctuality, when on tiptoe, and leaning over a beautiful pedestal of porcelaine, his foot slipped, and brought his whole weight prostrate on a large favourite dog that was sleeping on a mat at the base. This broke the reverie of the caliph, and demanded the exertions of all parties.

The enfuriated animal, writhing with pain, and his shaggy coat erect with anger and sudden surprise, had seized on the object of his discomfiture, and was shaking him, as our common curs would mangle a half-killed *bear*, when Monrod separated

him from his victim, who instantly sprung upon his legs, and presented a spectacle most perfect to form tragedy and comedy combined.

Whether from the rough treatment of the four-footed gentleman, or the force of the fall, poor Tabel's face streamed with crimson flow. Speech from him, just then, was quite out of the question; he had enough to do to wipe his half-stopped gory mouth with the back of his hand, and gaze horribly on the stained extremity, until a fresh torrent demanded a repetition of the act. This, however, did not many times require to be repeated; fear, in so many shapes, appearing before him, chilled the current, and life returned, as it were, as the blood disappeared: first ascertaining that the canine cause of his trouble was secured, the biped was the next grand consideration. At Monrod he looked a thousand questions; but as the old soldier knew his cunning seldom failed him, he merely smiled on his woful appearance, and turned away.

This gave the little ragamuffin some courage; he therefore, bowing for a time like an automaton Chinese mandarin figure in a tea-shop window, thus broke silence—"Mighty prince, caliph, viceroy, representative of the supreme and imperial sultan, sun of the earth, and glory of the world, descendant of the great prophet Mahomet, deign to pardon the unceremonious intrusion of your most humble and unworthy slave; but having known you, in your mighty condescension, have vouchsafed to glance an eye of approbation on a female slave brought by me, the humblest of your vassals, made me bold to venture on your privacy, to know if any commands, touching the object of your attention, was needful, thereby to add to your illustrious comfort; but, unfortunately treading on the tender paw of your dumb companion, as I ventured into your presence, and so raising his anger, I am thus rendered unfit to appear with all becoming decorum, before your

mightiness: but pardon, sire, my uncomfortable plight, and, with your usual clemency, frown not on my over-assiduous attentions to my duty."

"Go, go, thou officious fool!" answered Elmuton, "and learn thy duty better to my dog, lest I let him break his morrow's fast on thy deformed carcase."

Saying this, he turned away, and left the little crest-fallen, ragged rascal to make Monrod sensible, by signs and gestures, that Felix was at hand; then, as if wishing to make good his escape, he looked cautiously around, to ascertain his shaggy antagonist was secure, and scampered off, like an animated *Guy Fawkes*, on the fifth of November, at the sight of a *bonfire*.

This quite discomposed the former doings of Monrod; but the object of his greatest care was now on the brink that was for ever to mar or make. He knew not how to act; to attack again at the part he left off at, was impossible; therefore

making toward the caliph, with all due reverence, he thus commenced—" Elmuton, thou hast often said I have been to thee a faithful servant—I, without egotism, avow it. The silver frost of time has whitened my beard in thy service, and the short remaining days I may have now to count, I fain would spend in rest and prayer. I have ever done my duty honestly to man, and I fear not my account with my God. The earlier tide of life I ran more rough than smooth; but it was a soldier's hazard, and I do not repine; I cannot now weather a storm as I used to do, and yet my spirit is too proud to yield; for old age, perhaps that is wrong; I cannot help it, but I can avoid it."

" What storm hast thou to fear, my good old man," said the caliph, somewhat concerned, " that I cannot be thy shield and shelter?"

" It is I that can no longer be a shield for thy use," replied the veteran; " beside, I do forebode much dissension and per-

plexity. This castle, that has, at times, been so long my home, has lost its wonted attractions; strangers and upstarts usurp a power and ascendancy that make it irksome to my time; therefore, receive my sword, Elmuton; I resign it into thy hands, uncorrupted by rapine, and unstained with fraud or malice."

"By the prophet's shade, Monrod," answered the viceroy, "what is thy meaning? Thou wouldst not leave me, man?"

"What," said Monrod, "should I stop for?—stop until to-morrow, to have my trusty sword wrested from me by a new favourite of my master, and be driven forth another wanderer, to add to the catalogue of disgrace! Said ye not, Sebastian should ever be your second self, and next supreme in power? Dost thou think, Elmuton, thy old, hoary-bearded veterans and followers will bear the taunts and gibes of a fortunate adventurer, come from no one knows where—raised to power by the soldiers' voice, and credulity of a too

kind master? Dost thou think true and faithful Mussulmen will be ruled by an apostate — one who forswore his holy thinking, only to gain his ambitious ends? No, no, Elmuton; deceive thyself no longer. It is true, the troopers hail him with acclamations; led on by his sanguinary career, they enrich themselves with spoil, gathered in blood, and bask in the deluding sunshine of a victor's glory. Your weary citizens are groaning beneath the weight of war and tumult, and your true friends blush at what is doing. Yes, yes, Elmuton, we must and shall part. Yet I had hoped, ere I had retired from a world I have not disgraced, to have seen thee make thy people happy, and blessed their prayers, by giving thy son to be their wished-for ruler: but all is past, and I have done. Yes, yes; I will spare this old heart the bleeding pang of seeing my long-served master outlive his subjects' love, and be made the tool of designing knaves."

Here Elmuton was more overcome than ever his faithful companion had witnessed before.

After some time spent in silence, Monrod placed his sword and dirk at his pensive master's feet, took his hand, pressed it affectionately on his breast, and was leaving the pavilion.

This was too much for the caliph, who exclaimed, in an agony—"Old man, do with me as thou wilt; search for my poor boy, and I will shew mercy."

Monrod again took his master's hand with a holy fervency, and, pointing high to the east, impressively spoke thus:—

"Mercy, the greatest attribute of Heaven—
Sent, by the purer angels, from above,
To make men kindred angels here below!"

Elmuton threw himself on a couch, and, burying his face in his hands, seemed lost in inward communion. Now, now was the opportunity, or never; Monrod glided to the passage in the grove, but soon re-

turned, leading Felix, treading so lightly the floor, no sound was heard, save now and then a heartfelt sigh from the father. Felix was sadly disguised; a tattered garment hung loosely on his person; his face had become more pallid than usual; although so altered, still a benignity lived in his countenance, that made him at once look the object of love and commiseration.

CHAPTER IV.



> Believe me, prince, tho' hard to conquer love,
> 'Tis easy to divert and break its force;
> Absence might cure it, or a second mistress
> Light up another flame, and put out this. *Cato.*

TABEL had not time to assist his young prince with garments proper for the occasion, or scarcely to make him acquainted with what was scheming for his future welfare; a few hasty words from his little conductor was all the preparation he had for so trying an interview. Instead of throwing himself into the arms of his old friend Monrod at first meeting, and saying a thousand tender things, silence perforce was strictly to be observed, and one short, mutual embrace was substituted for all the endearing words natural to such friends, who had been so long and so cru-

elly separated. When Felix beheld his father in such a situation, his feelings overpowered him, and he was nigh sinking to the earth; but Monrod, with the sincere affection of a true friend, gave him an energetic pressure of the hand, and led him to the side of the couch where Elmuton lay, and then retired to a short distance.

For a time the poor youth stood, as incapacitated from all but the natural functions of life; at length, as made bold by innocence, yet not unmindful of his duty, he fell on his knees, and pathetically exclaimed—"My father!"

Elmuton, as though a voice from the tomb had sounded in his ear, started from his recumbent posture, and, resting on one knee, met the features of his son face to face. The colour instantly fled his cheeks—a tremour seized upon his whole frame—his lips quivered—he attempted to speak, but in vain, a groan only burst from his agitated bosom—and he would have fallen, had not his son caught him

in his arms, with an exertion that seemed to summon his whole strength; he turned his head aside.

Felix now became dreadfully alarmed; he feared the hand of death was on his sire, and, with a convulsive sob and painful emotion, exclaimed—"Oh, my father! my dear father!"

Elmuton evidently struggled hard with his feelings; such an inward contest spoke in every limb and feature, it would have moved the most obdurate heart. But however severe the trial for his old and confident officer, still he knew the temper of the object of his solicitude so well, he was determined to abide the consequences, however alarming they might at present appear. After a strong effort, the caliph disengaged himself from his son, and, motioning with his hand several times, without turning his face, he articulated—"Leave me—leave me, Felix."

The son was about to comply, when Elmuton caught him by his vestment;

and surveying him with an indescribable mixture of pity, parental solicitude, and astonishment, a struggling and half-disengaged tear suspended in his eye, he falteringly exclaimed—"Poor boy! I did not expect to see thee thus. Hast lingered near me long, thou altered thing—thou poor resemblance of my once blooming youth?"

Felix having recovered his alarm with his father's resuscitation, now replied, with a becoming fortitude, thus—"Within the city and its suburbs—further I have not strayed. My love and duty, so strong they still live within my breast, forbade my wanderings. Your person I have often seen, and by so doing have some comfort found, as passing crowds would greet thee in their love, and I, in true affection, cried—'Amen!'"

"Poor boy," said the father, emphatically, "rise, rise, and live for ever in my heart!" Then taking a full survey of him, continued, with a sigh—"This sad gear but ill befits the son of Elmuton."

"It suits him best," said Monrod, approaching—"it suits him best; the robe of power, once so tarnished, must ever hang heavy on the shoulders of the wearer, and but chafes the wound time can seldom heal."

The caliph took this smart rebuke of the old soldier; but replying not to it, continued thus to Felix—"Where, for this time past, hast thou shelter found?"

His son answered—"As fickle has been my biding, as the unsettled sand, driven by the turbulent winds. My old companions, who in prosperity so often shared my purse, or those that owed me obligations weighty, in fearful silence would turn aside—or, in commiseration, others would cast an eye of pity, yet feared to help one under such mighty displeasure. One dreadful night, when searching winds, and care my strength consumed, by want worn down, and shelterless my head exposed I lay, even the heavens seemed to mock my wo, *Selinus*, the good Christian

merchant, found me in this woful plight, insensible even to my wretchedness, and lost to my own calamity."

Elmuton at this reddened with rage, and, with some petulance, answered—"Rather would I you had perished, than been so succoured by these hated slaves!"

"Your slaves!" said Monrod—"your slaves they are not, nor your subjects they; but, by thus doing, their charity have shewn."

Each time the blunt old soldier spoke seemed to give fresh confidence to the youth, who commenced in the same strain. —"Thus the Christian bore me to his home, grieving much to see the unoffending one so lost; with parental care so cherished me—with such tender solicitude so watched and supplied my every want, and pouring the balm of friendship into my wounded spirits, I forgot my woes, and thought all men were just."

The caliph now became extremely agitated, and with a warmth that somewhat

alarmed his son, he said—"These vile Christians hold my direst hate! thy mother—mark me, boy—thy mother was a Christian! by spells, and cursed incantations, she once held my love and adoration; but she was cursed, and died at thy birth. Now mark me well—from this hour, upon thy life—upon the angry vengeance of my soul, if, from this hour, you act, think, or speak, with these fell dogs, my curses light on thee, and dark perdition follow!"

Felix was now in turn shockingly disturbed; his knees shook, his lips quivered, and with much difficulty articulated—"Hear me, my father, in mercy hear me!"

The viceroy, as though he would investigate the hidden resources of his son's inmost bosom, continued, in a rapid strain of volubility—"This woman too—this old Selinus's daughter, hast thou seen her too? Oh! it was a trick, it was magic, they have cast about, to lure, and catch thee—bind thee by their spells; they once

so far their cursed practice put, that made ye mad enough to ask of me to wed this fair enchanting devil. If thou dost so much lust after this same wench, I would have thee purchase her, and sate thy appetite; a good round sum will cancel with the father, preserve thy faith, and make peace with me."

At this diabolical avowal of wickedness, Monrod could scarce retain his temper: his hand involuntarily sought his dagger; but to subdue and hide his emotion, he turned away, and paced the apartment.

Felix was so stupified and overcome, he could not reply, which Elmuton conjecturing to arise from another cause, again commenced speech with additional vehemence.—"Ha, dost thou hesitate? I will have thee know me, boy—if thou dost further in this step than this, I will curse thee, and on thee be the Christian's blood!"

The poor youth was now quite subdued. Dropping on his knees, and clinging to his father's robe, he exclaimed, in a trans-

port of agony—" Mercy, great caliph! oh, in mercy, keep thy vengeance but from them! I swear I will no more than what I have!"

Elmuton, fixing his eyes sternly on him, answered—" Look to it, now thou knowest my fixed resolves! Compose thyself to thy proper duty, and at evening meet me." He was now retiring; but turning short at the door of the arbour, again giving his son a look of mixed anger and pity, exclaimed—" Felix, remember my resolves, and thy duty!" He then passed the avenue leading to the harem, and disappeared.

Monrod now approached the still-prostrate and confounded youth, who, raising his eyes on his old benefactor, burst into a flood of tears, and exclaimed—" My friend! oh, my friend!"

The veteran, greatly affected at the situation of his youthful prince, led him to a couch, and, in a conciliating tone of voice, said—" Come, come, arouse—bestir

thee now, for we have much to do, ere another day shall gain its breathing time. If I mistake not, to-morrow's sun will light a serpent on its way hither; we must be armed in mail, to avoid its sting and venom."

" What mean ye, my best friend?" answered Felix, with sudden surprise.

" I mean," said Monrod, " that which I fear was ever thy bane—I mean Sebastian; to-morrow he returns to full power, and the undisturbed confidence of Elmuton. Thy father's mind, my prince," he continued, " is fickle and imbecile, and on his weakest parts too easy played. With such a net has this sycophant so entwined him, that honesty, as powerful as it is, can yet not break a mesh. Thy brother's murder is, to most, mysterious—not so much to me, perhaps. You had not long been driven from the castle, when the Mamelukes rose strong in rebellion, and took their stand on a plain, some days march or so from this: Sebastian, with the city

troopers, was ordered to quell the insurrection; but ere he went, he so importuned to have the young prince Hamman with him, and so pressed upon the youth himself to go, that he might thus commence his life of war, I saw more than love or duty in his importunities. The rebels soon were quelled; the night guards and watch were set; Sebastian and your brother in one tent slept, when on the eve of their returning home, young Hamman was barbarously murdered; no stranger there was seen—no sound was heard—one stab alone had nearly twained his heart; however, some stir was made; but nought discovered of the assassin. After a time was passed, the sentinel on duty on the fatal night was missing; suspicion fell on him; the troops were hurried home, and thus inquiry dropped."

Felix, for a time, was lost in thought. At length he answered, saying—"But tell me, good Monrod, what thinks my father?"

When thus the old soldier spoke—"I

know not his thoughts, further than that nought against Sebastian will he hear; in virtue he holds him, having equal none."

The young prince taking the hand of Monrod, and looking earnestly in his face, with sincere affection said—"Oh, how blind he is when thou art by! But I have that to tell thee, will stagger thy belief, and put thy duty to a trying test."

He was about to proceed, when they were interrupted by Tabel, followed by two slaves bearing a large chest. After entering the pavilion, and placing their burthen near a couch, he dismissed them, in a tone of authority: then turning to Felix, and placing his hands to his head, bowed thrice to the ground; after twisting his body and shoulders, as though he would place every member in a proper position, thus commenced—"Illustrious prince, pardon my lack of duty, in hurrying you so unceremoniously to castle royal this morning, and confining, for a time, your sacred person; but the thoughts

of the future galloping, as I may say, over the present considerations, whirled me into such a vortex of perplexity, as rendered, me regardless and neglectful of your wants; but meeting your august parent, whom the prophet save! as he retired from, I hope I may say, the late happy interview with you, he was pleased to condescend to command your most humble vassal to wait on you, with garments and habiliments becoming your exalted rank; therefore, ever happy to serve so amiable and worthy a personage, I have caused to be brought hither what, in my humble thoughts, may be needful for your convenience and ornament."

"I thank thee, worthy Tabel, for all the services you have rendered me," answered Felix, "and shall not be unmindful of a reward, due to the hazards you have encountered for my welfare; thou hast known me from an infant, and, I believe, never found me ungrateful."

"As for that," replied the man of many

offices, "I am in duty bound to serve you ever, which service," continued he, "shall still be but as my pastime."

With this he began to display the contents of the chest, and sort out the most costly suit for present use; and the while he was assisting his young master in the office of *valet de chambre*, made many curious remarks on times past.—"Bless me," said he, "I remember the day when I was obliged to stoop to adjust thy garments, but now can scarcely reach to thy shoulders; but there, though I am none of the shortest of men, still you are much above the common height." Then turning to Monrod, begged him to render his services as to placing the robe over the neck of the prince, and fixing his turban in a becoming manner.

This office was gladly performed by the veteran, as he wished much for the absence of the chatterer; but he seemed now to have an extra licence for his tongue, and determined to use the full exercise of

its power. After many compliments on the handsome figure, the splendid dress, and ornaments, which were all of his own choosing, &c. &c. he again adverted to former times, much to the annoyance of his hearers—" Do you remember, prince," said he, drawing his form to its full height, " the sorry trick you once served me—thy brother was with thee then—rest his soul, he sleeps now in paradise, on the bosom of the prophet—when you together stripped me to the skin, and shewed me to the troopers, as a new-arrived wonder?"

" Well, well," said Monrod, peevishly, " good Tabel, thy prince is now a man; that was a boy's trick—let the remembrance die."

" I do well recollect that deed, and thy anger attending it," replied Felix, " to appease which, I gave thee a precious gem from my girdle, and was forced to lament it afterwards as lost by accident; the stir it caused, too, you cannot forget."

This stirring up quite raised the dor-

mant faculties of the great dwarf, who was very apt to let the profits of such freaks escape his mind: but at this he became a little uneasy, as he perfectly knew, had it been discovered which way the jewel was lost, or who secreted it, even at this late date, his head might answer for the consequence; therefore, hemming and coughing awhile to hide his embarrassment, he suddenly thought of business of great importance, which the hurry of the day had driven from his mind until now; therefore he took a hasty leave, and departed.

Monrod was anxious to hear what the prince had to communicate, and, as if waiting for him to resume the thread of his discourse, interrupted by the entrance of Tabel, he seated himself on the ottoman in silence.

Felix, taking a cushion by his side, proceeded thus—"Hear me now unfold, my friend, my greatest blessing, or my greatest wo. You know the love I bore the

fair Christian maid, Orinda, you well guessed the pangs I felt, when my father forbade me ever seeing her more. When the caliph denounced me the city and her presence, such strange foreboding hung about my heart, I could not leave this blessed yet fearful town; as the magnet attracts the steel, so her habitation prevented my wanderings; when night came on, often at her casement have I stood and gazed; then would I fancy I saw or heard the sigh that fanned the taper as it stood before her, and wished I was the flame that so received it: when all was dark, and I could no longer behold the object of my love, then would I wander the night away in restlessness and despair, sometimes beating the margin of the Nile, and wile the time, with listening to the howlings of prowling beasts, seeking for their prey, regardless of my own danger; at other times, driven by the snarling of the watch-dogs, and looked on with suspicion even by the brute creation; and when again

Sol's bright handmaid of the morn had sweeped the vapour mists from off the earth, then would I repair, and feast mine eyes on the window of my love, and grieve that I could not bestride the sunbeams, and steal the kiss that they unconscious gave.'

The old soldier's breast heaved a sigh at this recital, and pathetically exclaimed—"Alas! thou poor unfortunate!"

The prince continued—"In disguise, my days were spent in dreary wanderings; nature was miserably supported from the scattered fruits among the merchandize on the quays; at last disease and want prevented my limbs from performing their office. I crawled towards the residence of *Selinus*—I fell; and supposing nature was about to yield to her cruel privations, had ceased to think longer on my miseries—sorrow had escaped with my sensibility. In this forlorn state was I found, recognised by the good father of her my soul so fondly loved: he carried me to his

home—life was soon perceived not to have made its escape—restoratives were administered: to be brief, I soon recovered to health; and greatly in spirits, the frequent opportunities for intercourse with the fair object of my heart, soon made our passions grow into more than love. Her parent smiled on our attachment; and it was agreed we all should leave this fearful land, and haste with Christians to a distant port, where they, with much rich merchandize, are bound. In fine, it was thus—the night before the last, in the holy place wherein they solemnize their sacred rites, I became a *Christian*, and was married!"

"Holy prophet of my fathers!" said Monrod, starting, "then all is lost indeed!"

Felix, taking his hand, replied—"Not so, my friend—not so, indeed, if you but keep my secret; it is proposed, at to-morrow's dawn, we sail from hence; in my disguise had hoped to have passed, until the

prying eye of Tabel discovered me, when he, so importuned my father's grief, so lamentably told, my soul became melted; and, in the duty of a son, forgot I was a *husband*."

Monrod was greatly agitated; he paced the floor in disorder, and at length broke silence thus—"It is impossible—it is impossible!" said he; "your father has commanded your presence this night; the day is wearing fast—it is impossible!"

"Say not so, my friend—my more than father," answered Felix; "when the castle shall become still, and the city lulled, then will I hence to those I hold so dear, and, ere the morning can create a bustle, shall we be beyond the reach of such unnatural foes. The vessel is ready—the good Selinus has all things prepared—then pray mar not my happiness, by your over-love or fear."

Monrod pressed his forehead with his hands, and seemed in an agony of thought.

Felix knew not what to say, but participated in his friend's uneasiness.

Many minutes passed in such an awful silence as reigns around the deathbed of a beloved, respected, and departing friend. A deep and hollow sigh now broke from the old soldier; and he, in a voice not to be described, exclaimed—"Oh, prophet of my fathers! what a day will to-morrow be! Oh, had this frail frame have yielded up its tenant life but yesterday, what a world of wo would it have escaped! *To-morrow*, the man I hate must I encounter —see him caressed and honoured; to-morrow must I see the man I love discarded, abused, disgraced, perhaps to death. Are thus to end my toils in the career of honour? For mine has been a weary toil of honesty; and all the badge I hold is a clear conscience. Well, well, that is a glorious gem, worth millions of worlds, of honours, preferments, and command.—Yes, yes, boy," said he to Felix— "for thou art now no longer *my* prince—

I hold my faith sacred; I have found consolation in it, in all my troubles. Although I am but a rough soldier, in the God of my prophet I have always trusted. Sebastian is an apostate, and him I hate; Felix is an apostate too, and yet I love him. Oh, what an unaccountable, unfathomable being is man! By Mahomet, the world will send me mad! Then will the world say I was a fool before I was a madman. That will be truth. What have I to do with the world, that it should break my peace of mind? Ay, answer that, philosophy! Go—yes, go, boy; and I will go too—leave enemies here, to seek new ones elsewhere: I will accompany thee. Stare not—Monroîl says it. Yes; I will at least droop my head among strangers; *they* may pity, and that were better than pity from friends, at least such pity as those we are apt to call friends too often bestow. I love thee, Felix, because I know thy heart is good; that being the case, do thou pray with thy face toward

Jerusalem, and I will do the same toward Mecca; doubt not we shall meet our God."

Felix here burst into a flood of tears, and buried his face in the bosom of his friend, and wept loudly.

At this moment the gong was heard from the mosque, summoning the worshippers of Mahomet to evening prayers. What was to be done? If the prince attended, he should insult his new embraced faith. He looked steadfastly in the face of his friend, who, on the instant, understood his thoughts; he therefore bade him repair to his (Monrod's) apartments, and he would endeavour to settle with the caliph—would tell him it was not proper for the prince to appear in public until he was announced by open declaration. This at once removed all scruples on that head, and they departed, with the full understanding to make their escape when the retired time of night should give the fittest opportunity; for so well Monrod knew, when all the circumstances attend-

ing the son should be known, the father's fury would be such, *Cairo* would no longer be a home for him.

After the friends had retired to the seclusion of the old veteran's private apartments, and Monrod had prepared himself to attend the caliph in his devotions; he separated from the prince, with a mind overcharged with conflicting thoughts, the workings of which rendered him but little fit for what he was about to perform; however he forced a complacency to appear on his countenance, the more to settle the discomposure of his embarrassed friend: after a mutual embrace, they separated.

Monrod saluted Elmuton on the steps leading to the Ottoman temple. The viceroy's first inquiry was, in an earnest manner, for, as he observed rather pointed ly, his deluded son.

Monrod answered with firmness, but, at the same time, with all due submission, that, by his persuasion, he did not think it proper to appear before the public in

any situation whatever, until the late stigma was wiped away, by a public declaration from the highest authority, that the usual honours attendant on his high station in life should be commanded to be observed by all ranks.

This modest reason seemed to satisfy the caliph, in a manner not altogether expected by the veteran officer.

The prayers passed off as customary; Elmuton dismissed his retinue at the entrance of his own private suit of rooms, except Monrod, whom he commanded to send for Felix, and desire his attendance immediately.

This, of course, was performed on the instant, and not a word escaped the lips of the father, after giving his late orders, until the arrival of his son.

After Felix's salutations to his father, and he had returned them, evidently with some embarrassment, he then commanded the evening repast to be served.

It was done, and taken by the three in the most retired manner.

After fruits, sherbet, &c. had taken their due course, Elmuton desired Felix and Monrod to remain in the apartment with him during the night. He complained much of having perplexing and disturbing dreams of late; his spirits having been harassed to such a degree, that he found a fever pervade his whole body. To-morrow, too, he said, would be a trying day, therefore he should compose himself to tranquillity, if possible, and security, he *hoped*, without further ceremony.

This declaration much alarmed Felix and Monrod; their premeditated scheme of escape, for that night, vanished. The prince's feelings was now most acute; what was to become of his beloved Orinda and her parent? he had not seen them since they parted early in the morning—her care for his absence must be dreadful. To send, and let her know of his present situation, was impossible—and alike impossible she, by chance, could hear of it. To escape from where they were was

fruitless trying. There was but one entrance to this—a sort of divided gallery, and was used by the caliph only, at such times as the weather was the most sultry, it being situated at a lofty eminence of the palace, and commanded the cooling breezes of night uninterrupted; and, as such, became occasionally his dormitory; and when he retired in the manner already described, no further orders were ever thought necessary; the guards were placed at once, and thus the castle became hushed for the night.

Elmuton, after exchanging their embraces for the night, merely loosed his garments, and threw himself on a sofa.

This was a signal for those with him to do the same. All chance for the night was lost; the friends were only able to exchange looks of disappointment and intense anxiety, and then endeavour to compose themselves in the best manner their restless feelings would allow.

CHAPTER V.

Oh, here's a precious dirty, damned rogue,
That fats himself with expectation.

Every Man out of his Humour.

It being the custom of the Mahometans to rise with the first dawning of the day, to perform their orisons, the subjects of our narrative were on the alert ere the curtain of night was perceptibly withdrawn, sufficiently to admit the slightest gleam of light; and as the all-glorious and heavenly orb chased the sombre cast from the vaulted curve, and called terrene nature into activity, did the day's appearance beget to some the most painful sensations. Monrod, as he left the gallery with his master, cautioned Felix, in a hurried whisper, to conform himself to the will of his father, and he would make an early

opportunity to see Selinus and Orinda.

It has already been stated, Felix was not to be seen in public for a time, therefore he remained alone, while the caliph and his officer attended morning devotion. But what were his sensations—what his feelings, as he viewed the open country from the elevated balconies! For a great length of distance could he trace the space where he had so late wandered, night after night, in misery and despair; from here could he almost catch the spot where he left his beloved partner, happy in the anticipation, that a short time would transport them where their loves would live without alloy, and all their future life be bliss and peace. But now, alas! that prospect was so filled with dark obstacles, as made the view dreary and appalling to the sense. The yellow Nile was seen flowing far, far in the bosom of the country; and as the passing vessels stemmed the tide, and swelled their hempen wings with the breeze, did his emotions become almost

insupportable; perhaps that floating bark, proudly beating out of port, her gaudy colours kissing the waters, then playing in air—perhaps that very bark contained all he held most dear in life—"Oh God!" he exclaimed—"yes, yes, it is so. Those dear friends, holding me, for my absence, a perjured, perfidious, faith-forswearing villain, speaking of me only with execrations, and thinking of me as the vilest being in creation, ashamed of the land that gave birth to such a monster, now are leaving it for ever, disgusted, heaping curses on my head.—Oh, my Orinda, curse me not!—I merit it not!—Turn, turn, winds, and blow back that devoted bark, that I may once more clasp my love to this broken heart, and cleanse her from so foul a thought.—Oh that I could waft through the air—declare my eternal attachment in her ear as I skimmed along, and then be plunged for ever in the unfathomable deep!—Stay! oh, stay! thou best of parents and of friends!—stay, thou

good Selinus, and hear me exculpate myself, and exonerate my name from thy aspersions! Oh, let me not die in thy displeasure!—Hold—hold, ye unfeeling winds, and bear not, in such cruel triumph, all my life and hope away! ye tantalizing waters, cease to heave so exultingly, and mock my agitated breast!—Oh, nature, suspend thy functions awhile, and divide not thus the best of hearts, nor so cruelly sunder the tenderest affections!"

The imaginary woes of the half-frantic youth were working his feelings to a frightful pitch, when Tabel entered, and broke the delusive bubble. Felix did not discover the little yellow lump of a lackey until he came close to his elbow, and then, as if ashamed of his emotion, he turned away in silence, without acknowledging the humble prostrations of Tabel. This so nettled our hero of mishap, that he could not help observing it with some warmth of temper, in the following strain —" I had hoped, my poor services to my

prince had merited better treatment; but since I have unwittingly gained your displeasure, allow me only to deliver my commission, and then withdraw my unworthy self."

Felix, at this humble rebuke, was much hurt, and turning to the dwarf, took his hand, and expressed himself in sorrow, that his absence of thought should so far overrun his acknowledgments of services —services which, he trusted, would never be erased from his memory, while life should last.

The little man, at this, became soon composed, and, after many fulsome compliments, delivered his errand thus.—"The state affairs," said he, "my prince, have been much neglected of late; so many perplexing thoughts have engrossed the mind of the caliph, your father, the public matters are overgrown; and to-morrow being the day fixed for the return of Sebastian to his court duty, it hath pleased the viceroy to hold a court this evening,

for many and various purposes; but the chief, and most happy, is, to declare you reinstated in your rank and honours. Since returning from prayers, he has ordered all things to be got ready appertaining to that august ceremony. Monrod, therefore, being much engaged, desired me, your grateful slave, to communicate the same to you, and also to say, he has business to transact with a certain Christian merchant, and shall not be able to see you until noon; and, in the mean time, if it meets your pleasure and convenience, that his private apartments may be honoured, by making them your residence and place of abode, until opportunity shall fit that he may wait on you."

"I thank you most sincerely," answered the prince, "and will attend you to the lodgings of our best of friends."

Monrod's first consideration was, after he had learned Elmuton intended to hold a court that evening, to see Selinus, and the wife of his respected and beloved

friend; therefore, giving some partial orders preparatory to the duties of the day, he hastened to the Christian's house, by the most unfrequented ways.

Orinda he found at home, in the most poignant grief; her father, and many of his friends, had been in diligent search for the prince all the last night, and part of the preceding day. Many surmised he had been assassinated by a secret order, and his body carried away. No tidings, however, could be gained with satisfaction; all was distress indescribable; and when the fair Orinda saw the officer of the caliph enter the house, her senses seemed to take their leave, and a frightful frenzy seize her. At first, for a time, she remained speechless, her eyes fixed on Monrod in the most piercing manner; then she broke forth, in heart-rending acclamations, crying—"Oh, ye cruel—cruel butchers! would nought but his blood appease your insatiate appetites? was it not enough to drive him out to wander and starve—no roof to

shelter, no friend to cherish him? driven, like the first murderer, from place to place, and no pillow but the cold earth, to rest his devoted head. Monsters—monsters that ye are! lead me to the place where ye have lain his mangled corse, that I may hug his dear remains, and weep my life away. Oh, thou savage and unnatural father!—father, said I? no, no, that epithet were too tender for thee, Elmuton, in its most barbarous sense—thou devil! thou incarnate fiend! restore me my husband—my destroyed Felix!"

Here her feelings so overpowered her, she sunk exhausted, and lay as one in death. As this moment Selinus entered. The agonies of the parent, at seeing his child thus, were indescribable; he flew to her assistance, unmindful of the presence of Monrod. A faint scream announced life had not fled the beautiful sufferer; but an insensibility completely overpowered her, and her attendants bore her, in this state, to her chamber.

Monrod now accosted Selinus, and, in a few words, made him understand the situation young Felix was placed in; he then told him, it was his determination also to leave Cairo at the same time with them; for which purpose he should make every preparation in the course of the day, and when the council should break up at night, and the city become still, would he accompany the prince, and join them, to bid farewell, for ever, to Cairo.

This sudden and unexpected communication had nearly proved too much for the good old Christian, whose feelings had undergone such extremes for the last night and day, and whose limbs were almost sinking under his fatigues. He then made Monrod acquainted, he was fully prepared for their departure; his affairs were all adjusted, and his property turned into portable value. The ship in which they intended to sail he had purchased privately, and thus suspicion was lulled. He should now, he said, wait anxiously for

their arrival, and until then pray for the blessings of Providence on their pursuits.

The two aged adventurers now parted, as it would not be prudent for Monrod to be long missing from the castle. Beside, it was not known at what hour exactly Sebastian might enter the city; and further to cover the designs of the coming night, it was requisite he should attend, with seeming avidity, to the duties of the day. All was bustle among the soldiery; they longed to hail their demagogue, and Sebastian's name was now the only one heard in that department.

The sun, by this time, had become intolerably hot, and the bells had announced the first quarter of the day. Monrod entered the castle by a back and private way, to prevent observation; he had not, however, proceeded far, before his ears were astounded by the sudden clang of trumpets and martial music. It was unexpected, and caused him to hurry his steps, and, as he passed a narrow court, leading

to the grand staircase, he was surprised by the appearance of Sebastian, unattended. Had he encountered a man to whom he had been guilty of the most flagrant injury—one to whom he had committed an unprovoked and unmerited wrong, he could not have felt himself more embarrassed, or in a more unpleasant situation; he was unable to speak, when Sebastian accosted him in a subdued and half melancholy tone—"Well met, good Monrod!" he said; "how bears our noble master?"

"His bearing," answered the old soldier, "has been ill of late, Sebastian; but thy presence will remove his gloom, I doubt not, and dispel his melancholy."

"I am, good Monrod," replied he, "too much a stranger to the sunshine of joy myself, to administer relief to the distresses of others; this base murder has overwhelmed us all."

"Base indeed," answered the veteran, his choler rising vehemently; "perdition

catch the villain for the deed! Oh, could this old arm but guide my sword, to reach the damned traitor's heart, I would give this aged heart's blood, drop by drop, a sacrifice to my duty!"

Sebastian cast his eyes on the ground, and replied—"My life, brother soldier, is to me a burthen, until I can see the sorrow chased from my master's breast. That I had the charge of this precious jewel, is most true—that men may suspect my vigilance in the care of it, I fear also. This makes me tremulous at meeting the caliph, so kind, so good a master, and who has ever been to me as good a friend."

"Ay, Sebastian," said Monrod, "I have known that man the best of masters, and the best of friends, before calumny, hypocrisy, and cheat, his breast had steeled, or treacherous friends his confidence destroyed; but it is with him as with all mankind: the flimsy mask of hypocrisy may hold the strongest mind in thraldom; but when the veil is withdrawn, the very truth

is doubted, and honesty disregarded.—But I must to my duty; the day wears apace, and I have much to do. The caliph this night holds a court; weighty matters hang on the thread of business. Adieu!"

Thus the old soldier left him.

Sebastian was for a moment discomposed, then ascended the staircase leading to the viceroy's apartments. It was expected by most, he would make, at least, a modest triumphal entry into the city; but this, however, was not the case, and it was hardly known he had arrived, until the castle-gates were summoned for his entrance. The soldiers were disappointed at this circumstance, as they were always elated in blazoning forth his victories; and, as he passed through the streets, with a few followers only, the citizens avoided his encounter, or received him with the least courtesy possible, consistent with their own safety.

It has appeared, he ever courted and promoted war for his own gain and popu-

larity; but the citizens and artisans suffered so much by oppression, and heavy taxation, that the name of Sebastian was by them dreaded. This may account for the little bustle created by his entrance, and the silence that reigned until he arrived among the troopers, which was at the moment when so loud a clamour surprised Monrod.

As Sebastian approached the state-chambers, the commotion became greater; little Tabel brushed about, from place to place: every thing seemed to him neglected, and no one thing prepared. Besides, he had not yet bedizened himself in his robes of office. He jumped about like a lapdog, when a hot coal flies from the fire, and singes his tender skin; first, he cuffed one slave, then kicked another. The caliph too was gone earlier to the baths than he was wont, and Tabel, until this moment, had not been apprized of it: no one, he was sure, could attend his master as he could; beside, he held that office

as his own peculiar prerogative; and he had intended, too, the beautiful Zoa should be thrown in his way, most magnificently attired in the costume of the harem. Sebastian arrived, and he not in suit to conduct him to his master for the first private interview—what was to be done? his dignity was in danger, his consequence in a quandary, his preferment in a predicament, and his profit in a pickle.

But as he was seldom long at a loss for a subterfuge, he summoned up his invention in a nutshell; he shuffled after the great new-arrived officer, as fast as his legs would carry him. When he had come close beside, and was about to turn in front of him, the peaked-toe of his large slipper, (for our great dwarf had most uncommon large feet and hands,) caught in the mat, and threw him on his face prostrate.

This circumstance retarded Sebastian for a moment; he stopped to ask the little thing if he had sustained any injury,

which the lump, on all fours, took advantage of, by thus replying—" In this humble and dutiful posture let me remain, until I hear my noble and gallant leader, Sebastian, has returned in health and happiness."

Sebastian could not help betraying a sort of smile, and answered—" Thanks, my honest Tabel, for thy solicitude—Is the caliph apprized of my arrival?"

At this the sycophant raised himself on one knee, and replied—" Great sir, our royal master, not expecting your happy presence so early in the day, has retired to the baths; anon will he return; and in the mean time, if you will condescend to be conducted by your humble slave to his private closet, there to await his pleasure, every attendance shall be given for your comfort, after so weary and long a travel."

" Lead on, good slave," said Sebastian, " and let me know early thy master's bidding."

Tabel then snatched a wand, headed

with a mighty crescent, from one of the inferior officers, and marshalled the hero to the place of his request, clearing the way as he went, with as much noise and bustle as the beef-eaters make, on an English court-day, for a lord of the bedchamber; or as a parish-beadle among the charity-children, when the churchwarden is coming from divine service on a Sunday morning.

Monrod, as was natural to expect, hastened, the first opportunity, to relieve the anxiety of Felix, whom he found in the most dejected and desponding state. Without much preface, he made him acquainted with the situation of his wife and her father; but screened, as much as possible, the intense distress of his beloved partner. He then entered again on the subject of their departure, and his still fixed determination to accompany them. His property he had exchanged, but not without some loss, to the trafficking Jews, for such gold and jewels as would be the

least encumbrance in their flight, and the greatest service hereafter.

They now planned, that after the stir and bustle of the court was over, Monrod should, as was generally usual, set the watch, and take to his own charge the keys of the citadel, and as the gongs announced midnight, would he lead the prince, in the garb of a common trooper, which he should take care to procure, and, as if attending on his person, pass the sentinels, and at the outer gate, relieve the guardsman, by placing him in his stead; then would he, Monrod, join him, and make good their escape without suspicion. Selinus, Orinda, and several Christian friends, who intended to embrace this opportunity to take their departure, should they meet on the quays of Bulac, take ship, and immediately drop down with the current, and reach the open Mediterranean before telltale daylight should break from the heavens. It was most probable the caliph would not ask for his son until near the

hour for the ceremony, as he would be wholly taken up with Sebastian, and preparatory business. Felix, with this account and arrangement, much recovered his spirits and fortitude.

An hour had passed away with the friends in social intercourse, when they were visited by Nulac, a comrade officer of Monrod's, and one who was much respected by him. He, like most of the rest about the palace, was ardently attached to the prince Felix. He had not seen him since his return, and welcomed him in the following strain—"Thus let me kneel to greet my prince, and praise the prophet for restoring him to home and honours."

"Thanks, thanks, my friend," answered Felix; "may our attachment be mutual and lasting! Do away, I pray, all further ceremony, and tell me what news is stirring, now Sebastian is returned, and the city gained its usual activity?"

Nulac respectfully replied—"The city is but in a melancholy mood; but the sol-

diery intoxicated with rejoicing: I have of late witnessed such a scene, that the bare remembrance of it makes me sick."

Monrod at this forced a smile, and said —" How now, comrade officer! thy stomach was not wont to be so tender; pray give us the cause, if thou canst bear the recital?"

" It is my temper that sickens, worthy comrade," answered Nulac; " my spirit has been ruffled, and my senses offended—that is my sickness. But you shall hear. —As I lately was in attendance on Elmuton, Sebastian begged an audience, to pay his duty on returning home, and well you know how I hate that leasing, apostate villain, for the many indignities he has heaped upon me since he has grown into power. The caliph, in an ecstacy that shook my every nerve, commanded his instant attendance. He entered the room with a slow and solemn pace; his eyes but glanced on Elmuton; then he heaved a deep and hollow sigh, covered his face

with his hands, and dropped on his knees without uttering a word. The caliph rose from his cushion, and stood before him; still he knelt, wept, and roared, until Elmuton fell upon his neck, and like two blubbering wenches, mixed their tears."

Monrod, in heat, exclaimed—"Old Horus, hatching on the Nile's damp bank, never produced a *crocodile* more subtle!"

Nulac continued—"Their griefs abating, your father spoke of you, my prince. He said, he feared he much had wronged you, and, as a proper reparation, should this night, in council, proclaim Felix to be in all Elmuton's son. Oh, had ye but have seen the villain Sebastian then! he seemed to choke; the colour in his cheeks fiercely came, and went—he became quite convulsed; his heart so throbbed against his inner side, like as the angry waves, which on a rock beat hard, that stops their wonted course."

Felix, in astonishment, asked the meaning of all this, and said—"Did not my father mark this emotion?"

"He did," replied the officer, "and with such kind compassion, that I griped my dagger in vexation; inquired if aught did ail him? the wretch he stammered ere he could reply; then found a resting-place —then got up—complained of sudden sickness—unexpected joy—too great kindness; then he blessed such a father—bowed so cringingly—humbly begged excuse, and said, he must to bed."

"Oh, the accursed villain!" exclaimed Monrod.—"Oh, prophet! can such a reptile live, breathe, and have its being, associate with *men*, and be called *man*? yet so it is, and be beloved, caressed, and cherished. I know the serpent's drift—I see where he would spring, and fix his poisonous venom; but he shall be foiled—yes, by this old and weatherbeaten trunk, he shall be foiled—yes, my prince, fear him not, for he *shall* be foiled!"

Felix was astounded at this warmth of his friend, and replied to it thus—"What mean ye, Monrod?—what can this with

me?—Pray tell me, have I ever done him ill, that you would hint thus at my name, and should be so much moved? I can well remember me the time, when Sebastian was my companion, when he would highly applaud my boyish tricks—match me and my brother to excel each other in dangerous exploits—emulate us to leap from battlement to battlement, or which could furthest swim out, and longest buffet the current of the Nile—in hunting, which could nearest gain upon our savage prey, and strike the furious animal, as it, pent up, in death-wrought madness lay, or brave danger in its worst of shapes; and but for thee, good Monrod, by so doing, should oftentimes have offended our father past forgiveness."

"Yes, boy," answered Monrod, "I have watched him long and narrowly—well he knows it. You, my poor thing, have been my peculiar care. What I have done, I have done—let that rest; as I have hitherto done, so would I ever do: I have

endeavoured to live beloved by all good men; but to this Sebastian, hateful have ever been; I know him well, a dark, designing, subtle villain! His ambition looks a fearful height; let him beware lest he fall. The soldiers, true it is, love and adore him; his cruelty is their gain. His courage in the field no one can doubt; no mercy his, but to back his own pursuits; and when with petty rebels you hear him parley, and it is policy by speech to quell the mob, such honeyed words from his lips will drop, that sorry discontent falls fast asleep, and murmuring faction sinks back ashamed."

Felix answered his friend—"Oh, fear him not, thy honesty, thy honesty shall ever be a shield to keep thee safe from malice like his."

"Honesty," said Monrod, "honesty, my good youth, is not the world's garb; it is unmarketable, and detrimental to the traffic of mankind; cheat, defraud, hypocrisy, they are the goods most current, and

pass strangely; see how rich your dealer in them gets, while the poor simpleton, having only honesty for his stock, may become a bankrupt, and laughed at for a dolt."

Here a trumpet sounded, that broke up their conference, and summoned the officers to duty. They then took a hasty farewell of the prince, and left him once more to his own meditations.

Sebastian had finished his interview with the caliph, and seemed as if he wished to shun the haunts of man. He was perambulating on the outside of the walls of the castle, as in communion with himself: all here was still; the torrid heat kept those within, who could retire to the cooling recesses of their habitations: he was pacing a long piazza with a disordered step, and his looks bespoke the working of his mind to be turbulent and irksome. At this moment, a poor dejected-looking object, ragged and forlorn was his appearance in the extreme, passed one of the

portals, and as he turned an angle, met Sebastian face to face, at which encounter his remaining strength seemed to forsake him; he leaned against a pillow—his eyes dropped to the ground—his emaciated limbs trembled—his lips quivered— and speech failed him. Sebastian eyed him, for an instant, with a severe and reproachful look; he was about to pass on, when the wretched creature bowed as low as his strength would allow, when the man in power accosted him thus—"What wouldst thou here? thy boldness shall be whipped out of thee! hence away, or the bastinado shall teach thee to know thy proper distance!"

At these words, the poor wretch raised his hands to his head, and made the most submissive obedience, when Sebastian continued in a despiteful and reproachful manner—"What wouldst thou here?—what beg? why you will get the stocks, if you ask a little where so much plenty is: you should know this is the caliph's castle,

so if you want, go beg where want doth live, for plenty knows it not!"

At this rebuke, the man of sorrow raised his eyes half upwards towards Sebastian, and in a feeble voice, said—"Good, noble seignior captain, pardon me; I have so transgressed in your sight, you will not remember your slave."

At this, Sebastian gazed at him fully, and, as if a basilisk had fixed him, he stood for a moment aghast; however he soon recovered his surprise, and in a voice that struck terror to his hearer, he exclaimed —"Thou bold and barefaced rascal!—why, Saldan," (this is the man, it should be remembered, who was sentinel at the tent of Sebastian on the night of the murder of prince Hamman,) "what have you no fear? You will be hanged, and your quarters hung on the city gates, as a terrible example. There is murder on thy head! it was my mercy let thee once escape, when my soul was so filled with horror, I knew not what I did, and each heart

sickened at thy damned and sacrilegious act!"

"Oh, holy prophet," said Saldan, falling on his knees, "I am as innocent as truth of that most accursed deed! and when you laid suspicion's iron whip on me, and persuaded me, in your mercy, to fly my fate, like one that had the horrid guilt upon his head, I fatally took your advice, and stamped confirmation in men's minds."

"What," answered Sebastian, fiercely, "what, fool, are ye mad enough to declare to me you did not do the deed, when those might be found to swear it true?"

"By the prophet's shade can I!" said the trembling victim. "Since last we parted," he continued, "in trouble have I sojourned, nor quiet known, since from the camp I stole: I crawled to the city, with the intent to make my solemn oath, in holy mosque upon the sacred Koran, in the face of the prophet and the world, my innocence of that fell *murder!*"

"Slave!" replied the captain, taunting-

ly, "Base slave! dost thou think thy oath would avail thee aught, when I, Sebastian, contradicted?—Dost thou think Heaven was offended so, to rain daggers from the clouds, to pierce men's hearts when they sleep? Go to—get ye hence—and at a distance starve!"

"Then here will I lay me down," answered the affrighted Saldan. "Food I have not tasted for two days past; the night before the last, I had surely fallen, had not some Christians, that were revelling, forced me to their merry-making, and recalled life by the sustenance they compelled me to take."

"Christians revelling, and in the night too! speak—tell me further?" said Sebastian, with some curiosity. "Our city's peace, and in these dangerous times, must not be broken by their vile orgies!"

"In the suburbs," replied Saldan, "as I crawled along, the midnight watch had just proclaimed the hour, when from a house there burst such riotous mirth, as,

from our faith, I have never heard: they found me sinking in despair and want—they gave me shelter and relief. Some, five or six of Christian vassals there, had met to celebrate a wedding, as in their custom they are wont; they so laughed, joked, and put their spirits on, they more like daws than men did chatter. They forced me to be free, and bade me, in their fashion, pledge the married groom; but when I asked his name, they so chuckled and mocked our holy faith, that, but for life, I would have spit on them—the dogs! One said he had been a prince, another a beggar, the third, a Turkish infidel, but was now a blessed Christian. This so vexed my spirit, I remained mute; but from half-dropped words, and drunkards whispering, I caught the female's name."

At this, Sebastian became so agitated with anger, he could scarcely articulate the following sentence—"Tell me her name; the sorceress shall be burnt!"

Saldan answered—"Orinda they called her."

Sebastian, at this name, started back, and fixed his eyes on Saldan, as though he doubted his own senses; then in a voice half choked with emotion—"Orinda!" he cried, "Orinda!—it is old Selinus's daughter, the rich Christian merchant. Blessed prophet, I am no marksman, if I hit not here! I have been," said he, in an inward tone, "advised by good and trusty spies, that this boy Felix lurked about the city, and it was mistrusted these Christians harboured him, a beggar—an outcast—christened—and married! It is—it is, or must, or shall be so! Go on—more—more, or I shall burst!"

Sebastian's manner was now so strange, Saldan was somewhat alarmed; but being again commanded to proceed with his account, he thus continued—"To find our faith so mocked, it angered me, and to their teeth I soundly gave the lie. We had no beggar, e'er so poor, would act thus. This made them laugh; they then more tauntingly cried—'Though late a beggar, he was high born, and a prince."

Sebastian could now no longer contain himself; his tongue faltered, his limbs trembled, and he knew not how to combat with his feelings. At length he found relief, by giving vent to his speech thus—"Thanks! thanks! oh, I could almost hug thee for this information, you have given my hungry soul such banquet! I ever will be thine; I will save thy life—I will do thee such good turn, that thou shalt bless the hour that sent thee here! But hold!" he said, drawing nearer to Saldan; and in a familiar tone of expression, "good fellow, thou must remain near me, and for fear thy person should be recognised, or prying curiosity get busy, I will instruct thee in such a lesson, that though a counterfeit, thou shalt current pass."

Saldan now had gained considerable confidence, and his confidence seemed to give him strength. He then answered his former officer, saying—"The prophet bless thy goodness! it shall bind me ever for thy slave!"

Sebastian, at this, gave him a look that went to the very inmost soul of Saldan, and accompanied it with these words—"Thou wilt have much to do; for well thou knowest I hold thy life upon my very word. First," he continued, giving a purse at the same time—"first, here is money for thee; go stuff thy carcase out with good strong food, and bring colour in thy face; then trim thy visage, pluck thy eyebrows bare, change thy gait someway—more stooping go; force out a tooth in front, for that does much disfigure a man, and alter strangely his articulations and his sounds. If any fool, or inquisitive knave, should ask ye whence ye came, say you are my townsman; such names I will give you, and with anecdotes make you replete withal, and stories famed, that you shall satisfy curiosity to the full. If any tax ye closer, draw your sword, swear, and bluster, daring any one to proof."

Here he became quite overcome with

different emotions, and could proceed no further, when Saldan replied to him—"Great seignior, you would put much upon me."

Sebastian again giving him a look full of meaning, said—"You have much to answer for: thy life is in my keeping. Saldan, be but just to all that I would have thee say or do, you shall not only live, but have the sweets of life, to make it worth the keeping. Now hence, and get thee too some other dress; but mind ye have it fashioned so, that it, some way or other, change your shapes; for tailors, in these times, are very apt."

Saldan, again bowing to the ground, replied—"Noble captain, I will even try to outdo thy bidding. But by what name, so please ye, call me?"

This careful observation of the new recruit pleased Sebastian, and he, with as much good-humour as was in his nature, said—"Right—you will do well, I find. I must not call thee honesty, or each thief

will claim thee for a kindred brother; or if I call thee rogue, you will not find one that will like to own thee for kind, though it were to attend him to the gallows: so I will call thee Needful, then shall keep thee ever to myself."

Saldan, then bowing, took his leave, with these words—"And for ever will I be thy faithful slave."

Sebastian, after the departure of his creature, stood for a time fixed to the spot; the muscles of his face worked—now rolled his large grey eyes from side to side, now bit his lip, now struck his forehead, now hit his left palm with his right clenched fist, with vehemence; then turning suddenly round, he gave a half unmeaning laugh. If to read his thoughts at this time, we should read them thus—"Men may suspect me a murderer—let them; but where is the man that can accuse me, or dare say it to my face? They may call me ambitious—let them, with all my heart! what is it, when they have said so, but the common food of the world?

"Ambition! against it who can rail,
When there is not a rank but cherish it?
Even the vile impostor in the streets
Will play his hundred Proteus tricks a day,
To fill, with passers' pence, his dirty fob:
Then, in his midnight drunken revels, boast
To his loose fellows, what his wit hath done.
"The common thief has his ambition too;
But when he thinks the pinnacle has gained,
Oft finds the gallows there for his reward.
Your good and truly pious man doth fix
His ambition much the loftiest,
For that doth reach to the heaven of heavens."

CHAPTER VI.

> Oh ye who, sunk on beds of down,
> Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
> Think for a moment on his wretched fate,
> Whom friends and fortune quite disown! BURNS.

THE sun no longer was visible in the heavens, the public evening prayers were over, and night, which is, part of the year, an Egyptian *day*, called the inhabitants of the castle, and those belonging to the caliph's court, into activity. The chief people of the city too were stirring: so long a time had elapsed since they had approached their ruler, that they had many public matters to lay before him.

The castle began to appear brilliant, the flambeaux in the various courts and squares flashed their light in the atmosphere, the different illuminated galleries,

colonnades, and open parts, or those enclosed with golden lattices only, exposing their gaudy and costly embellishments, the burning censers, suspended at each opening, the winding avenues, lined with innumerable lights, making a fiery passage up the sides of the vast acclivity, seemed to those in the old town of Cairo, or such as inhabited the banks of the Nile, as if the palace was one huge ball of light suspended in the air, but confined to the earth by so many strings of vivid flame. The troopers had lined each passage, the eunuch guards had taken their station nearer the presence, and all was in readiness for the great golden doors to be thrown open, that divided the gorgeous saloon of ceremony, and throne of the ruler, who guided this part of that garden of nature, and especial spot of Providence, to the view of those who dared venture, by right or courtesy, to so august a presence.

All was in readiness, when the seignior

Tabel, superior officer of the eunuchs of the harem, and occasional gentleman-usher, captain-general of the dwarfs, &c. &c., glided through an aperture, and took his station close against the carved massive golden panels of the principal folding doors. His appearance it would be impossible accurately to describe: his huge turban was brilliantly bedizened with sparkling gems; a large crescent blazoned on the top, like a new moon; a sash, or scarf, hung from the left shoulder, across the breast and back, and dragged on the opposite side; his slippers were scarlet and yellow, curiously wrought with gold, the points turning up nearly to his knees. In his hand he bore a staff, or mace, of gold, as weighty as he could well carry, richly ornamented, and surmounted with the ensign of the prophet.

After looking himself well over for some time, and taking particular care that those about should notice him also, he turned his face close to the rich entrance,

and after a short space, answered a signal from within, when the doors flew open, as if by enchantment, and shewed a scene that dazzled the eyes, and nearly overpowered every sense. At the same moment, twice seven golden trumpets announced the caliph was sitting, and the court open. The various and more boisterous instruments from without gave information to the city; the great gongs sounded, the guns on the battlements roared; the vessels on the river caught the strain, as the distant hills answered in echo, and the ocean swallowed the din.

The great Elmuton, caliph and Viceroy of Grand Cairo, was seated beneath a canopy of gold cloth, studded and surmounted with the symbol of the Mahometan faith; the holy Koran and sacred sabre were placed before him, on a large cushion of costly stuff, illuminated with perfumed lamps, that spread their odour throughout the vast apartment. Immediately behind Elmuton was arranged a

body of black ferocious-looking Arab guards; and near them the public executioners, whose appearance struck terror to the beholder, and in the most terrific costume. On the viceroy's right stood the youthful Felix, in most magnificent attire; his face bore a somewhat pallid hue, but his whole contour was of a beautiful cast. Next him was placed the faithful Monrod, whose countenance looked the index of honesty. On the caliph's left was a vacant place: it was generally filled by the next in authority after the royal blood, consequently it belonged to Sebastian; however, he was not present.

Elmuton rose from his seat, and, assisted by the officiating priests, approached the holy Koran in a reverent manner, bowing thrice, and extending his arms full length, over the sacred volume, in solemn silence; he then returned backwards to his seat. It was now for the next in rank and honours to perform the same; as such, all eyes were turned on Felix. Such a

tremour pervaded his frame he could scarcely contain himself: he turned to Monrod, and in one glance conveyed volumes of meaning: if he prostrated himself, he should belie his new-embraced creed; he stood aghast. When Monrod passed, slowly and reverently, to perform the service, a look full of inquiry passed round, even from the grand caliph to the most subordinate officer; all was silent for a moment, when the old soldier stepped up to the chief priest, and whispered a short sentence. This satisfied the divine, who making his obedience to Elmuton, in confirmation of the same, the ceremony proceeded.

It may be necessary to say, Monrod informed the holy father, that until Felix was openly reinstated, and the late decree of banishment publicly cancelled, he stood but in the situation of the humblest slave. This act of submission and duty was communicated to the viceroy, and by him highly approved.

When the chief officers had paid their

reverence to the dictates of the prophet, and one universal prostration was performed, the business of the night commenced. Now again a repetition of sound from the golden throats of the clarions within, was answered by the clamour without. Standing in the centre of the arch of the doorway, was still the little great Tabel, with his face towards his master. Behind, and waiting to be marshalled to the foot of the throne, was a body of aged Mameluke officers, without arms or accoutrements appertaining to war, bearing, in humble suit, a petition in behalf of their suffering fellows, now groaning under severe punishment, as rebel prisoners, awaiting only the hand of death to end their miseries.

After a time, they were conducted by the mighty marshal major domo, in silence, to the foot of the throne, when an aged and well-proved loyal Mameluke thus addressed the chief in power—" Dread sire, and most potent prince, caliph Elmuton,

our poor services thou hast ever had at command, and ever found us loyal and dutiful; but our deluded and humble fellows, feeling the vengeance of your mighty and all-powerful arm, and sorely smarting beneath the chastening rod of Sebastian the brave, crave your gracious mercy, that their lives be spared."

To this the caliph replied—"My sentence on the renegadoes shall suspend, until the brave Sebastian his report hath made, whose sorrowed heart is so oppressed with wo, that, instead of laurels, cypress entwines his brows."

After prostration, the petitioners withdrew, and a body of citizens then approached, in much the same manner, and presented the following—"Great father, and most mighty judge, your loyal and afflicted citizens, partaking with you the general grief, here offer their true and unfeigned love, and firm attachment, for your condolence; and to stop some faction that is stirring, do pray that you, in

your perfect judgment, name your successor, that they may hope to teach him to love them ere he doth command."

Elmuton at this was somewhat affected; but soon recovering, answered—"Citizens, I love and thank ye all; and if the sultan should grant my wish, when I no longer can guide the public weal, that this great care devolve on Felix, my well-beloved son; now let the trumpets speak my wish aloud, and register it in heaven."

The instruments, obedient to their masters, sounded with double force.

During the day it had become pretty generally known what was to take place at council in the evening, and had partially prepared the city for this joyful news; therefore, when it was thus announced, the rejoicing was so loud and instantaneous, that with the quick firing of the ordnance, the clanging of public and private gongs, the shouting of the people, and, as by enchantment, the sudden illuminations, filling the hitherto dark parts of the town

with brilliant glare, so struck upon the senses, and the concussion produced by the explosion of full-charged cannon so shook the ground, as if the earth was bursting with rejoicing.

When the din within was hushed, Felix was led by the priests to the feet of the caliph, where he kneeled, and received the blessing of his father. The prince then accepted the homage of the whole court; and with what fervency it was given, every countenance expressed. Poor little Tabel found it extremely difficult to restrain his expressions of delight within the bounds of decorum; he whisked about like a chicken in a crowd—sidled first one officer out of place, and then another, until he got behind the object of his solicitude; he then, in a manner which he did not wish to be observed, seized the hand of the prince, and gave it such a tremendous squeeze, that made Felix turn sharply round, and almost cry out with pain; but when the eye of the youth caught the fea-

tures of him that caused the momentary pang, it had nigh upset the gravity of his face, for the jostling jack-in-office so grinned, nodded, and twisted his countenance into such queer contortions, that Felix was obliged to turn away.

The ceremony attending the late circumstance had thus far ceased, when a single trumpet bespoke the entrance of some one of consequence. Sebastian now entered, but slightly attended; and after attending to the various Mahometan observances, as to religious significations, he, in the most humble manner, went through those of duty and obedience to his royal master; then taking the place assigned to his rank, Elmuton addressed him in the following manner:—"My good and valiant friend Sebastian, welcome, most welcome! I ever feel a vacancy when thou art not by. Beside, to shew the love I so much bear towards thee, would have thee witness what herein I shall write, that thy good allegiance may

reach the sultan's knowledge, and from him meet a reward for thy manifold *services* rendered to the state."

Elmuton then wrote with his own hand (it being to the sultan), which, when it was finished, he gave into the hands of Sebastian to read; and as he perused it in silence, the contents were evidently much to his satisfaction, for each muscle of his face bespoke the gratification of his heart, as he returned it to his master, bending at the same time on one knee, and accompanying the observance with these words—" High and mighty sire, my poor services you ever overrate; and my heart, that has of late been swelled to the brim with sorrow, now binds my tongue, and stops my honest thanks. Pardon, sire; but take my silence for my eloquence."

The caliph then sealed the scroll, and commanded that some trusty messenger be forthwith dispatched with it on the instant, and with all speed imaginable, and proper reverence, lay it at the imperial sultan's feet.

During this ceremony Sebastian was restless and conspicuously uneasy; he endeavoured as much as possible to keep his eyes from the part where the prince and Monrod stood, but he was incapable; and as often as they wandered involuntarily there, would be sure to meet the scrutinizing gaze of the veteran officer, and seemed to give him fresh embarrassment. At length, the viceroy having dispatched his commission by a proper officer to the sultan his master, he again turned to Sebastian, and resting his eyes on him, for a short time, said—"You, my good friend, who so keenly feel for others' wo, dispel this too long cherished melancholy, and take share in the general joy, and from him that is dead transfer thy love to him that lives."

Sebastian answered not for a moment, but remained as buried in thought; then suddenly, as recollecting himself, and ashamed of his absence, he hastily drew his hand across his forehead, fetched a deep

sigh, and said, in a melancholy mood—"He that in the morning so sorely grieved over the untimely grave of him he loved, is but a sorry guest to make merry in the evening at the marriage-feast of him he doth respect."

Elmuton, turning on his seat, and taking his officer by the hand, replied—"Thou hast well spoken; for like a marriage it is, when sire and son meet, that have so long been sundered; it is a union pleasing to the gods."

To which allusion the officer answered, in something of a mysterious manner—"Yet we are told that Orpheus wept when Pluto robbed him of his Eurydice."

Felix at this seemed to catch the meaning of the dark communicant; his hand dropped by his side, and unknowing what he did, he griped that of his friend Monrod, who answered this dumb communication of thought with an equal pressure, but stirred not his face to meet that of his unfortunate young friend.

When Sebastian had finished his last sort of metaphor, he cast his eyes on the ground and appeared thoughtful, which Elmuton observing, interrupted his reverie, by saying—"Why is my friend so thoughtful? Does ought disturb his peace that I may not know?"

Again Sebastian, as awaking from a dream, turned from his master, and, in an absent sort of way, replied—"Thoughtful! Me—no—nothing; but that I have lately had a dream, which somewhat moves me. Methought I saw our holy mosque transformed, and where the crescent stood a cross was fixed—*you*, a grandsire, was dandling Christian brats."

At this Monrod whispered the prince, and said—"We are betrayed; but fear him not, nor answer you aught."

The caliph rose from his seat, and followed Sebastian, who had gone forward several paces into the open floor of the court; and, as he came in front of him, exclaimed, in great agitation—"By the pro-

phet, you have turned my blood to ice! Speak more of this, for you seem to give the vision substance."

Sebastian now turned full on the prince and Monrod, and then said carelessly to the father—"You have the vision—let others give the substance that better can interpret."

The caliph did not notice the look his officer gave the prince, so full of meaning, when he was delivering his last words; but drawing his cimeter in rage, said—"By the prophet's shade, then, will I rip thy bosom open, and have the secret from thy heart!"

The officer immediately bared his bony bosom, and exposing it to the point of the angry caliph's weapon, cried—"Do it—it is here—fear not; then shall I not betray the secret of my prince;" at the same time pointing his finger, with savage exultation, towards the trembling youth, who stood fixed, like a statue of despair.

The declamation was so pointed, and came

so precipitately, Monrod was overwhelmed and unable to move; the father's hand dropped—he rested on his sword—his eyes glared—a rising in his throat seemed to choke him. The perspiration at length gushed from every pore, and he found relief as his respiration became easier, when he turned to his son, and said, in frightful anger—"Thy prince! ha, ha, ha!—Felix, thou hypocrite, now is the dreadful vision past! Is it come to this, thou beast? Go, glut thy wife with blood and carcase both!"

Here he made a dreadful thrust at his son, which was parried aside by Monrod, who watched, and expected his anger would rise to this. The old faithful friend of both then stood between them, and exclaimed to the father—"Hold, and stain not thy soul with thine own blood! Heaven's high laws divine forbid the damned deed!"

Sebastian had now began to throw off the mask of metaphor; he likewise arrested the arm of the caliph, and said—

"Our laws will not hold good, that you, without a just decree, should slay a *Christian.*"

The last part of this sentence he accompanied with such a Satanic grin, and unquestionable meaning of gesture, that completely overcame the viceroy; he remained fixed, and unable to articulate; a sudden chill ran through every vein, and caused a momentary trembling. When he had recovered, he darted his eyes on the affrighted youth, as if to annihilate him, and said—"Art thou Christianed too, thou dog? Thy cunning hath saved thy blood from my hand; but thou shalt not escape;" and throwing his sword from him, he clasped his hands, and, extending them above his head, continued—"Come, all ye hell-born inventors, that ever lent your aid to mortal man, pour forth your dreadful seed upon my brain, that there may hatch such fell contrivances as earth's creation never before conceived!"

Here Sebastian, as if to assist his prayer,

whispered him, when he turned short round, and addressed his son, with the most demoniac sarcasm, thus—"But tell me, I do beseech thee, if thou wilt be pleased to acknowledge me as governor here, if Monrod did not help and contrive to put this practice and this cheat on me?"

The old soldier at this reddened with rage, and, drawing his sword, replied in a prompt and undaunted manner, alluding to the whisper that passed from Sebastian to his master—"Elmuton, give back that thought—it was not thine own, nor dare to stain me thus; and but for reasons strong and stubborn, here would I render up my future services, and all considera-tion for the past, and break this honest sword at thy feet. But in despite will I hold it a little longer; ay, and for thy need too, great caliph; and if any here there is that like it not, or think their own is better tempered, I dare them to the proof—I will measure it with him, blood for blood." Saying this, he passed Sebas-

tian, darting at him a look of the greatest contempt and defiance; then bowing slightly to his master, left the apartment with a firm step, without further ceremony.

The wretched Felix, thus left alone to his fate, seemed for a time lost; but arousing himself, and looking around him, as if to claim assistance from some one, though no eye of pity dared to turn upon him, he summoned more courage than could be expected, and with a firm voice, thus delivered himself—"Great governor, slander not Monrod, nor lay thy displeasure on that honest man, for, on my soul, he knew not of my doing! That I am a Christian, is most true; and that I embraced the blessed faith of my own free and uncontrolled will, I swear! With such a parent, Elmuton, and without a home—a wanderer, contumed, disgraced, driven forth to starve, all I did possess was within myself, and all my ardent love could wish for, or my soul pant after, that

have I possessed.—Oh God! there is my bosom's wreck; and for the holy faith I have embraced, there I fix my hope, and look for my reward."

Sebastian, when he had heard this declaration, took the caliph aside, and in a low voice, called his master's attention thus—"Dread sire, dismiss your council and attendance; for if you banish this bold-faced blasphemer, or what else on him decree, it were best the sentence should be as private as possible. The Christians in the city are numerous, and dark cabal is yet lurking in secret places."

To which precaution the caliph answered, taking the hand of his officer with much fervency—"Thanks, thanks, my best of counsellors and friends!" and turning, with mighty authority, commanded the court to be broken up, and all to leave the presence, save Sebastian, and that apostate dog Felix.

The trumpets at this order sounded a hasty retreat; and with great precipitancy,

soon not a vestige of the imposing ceremony remained. Little Tabel was determined to be the last to leave; he fidgeted about from place to place, and still found something to do; the various openings were shut by him, one after another; but when the reluctant dwarf came to the private door, used for the caliph's entrance only, he hung fire confoundedly; at length, looking cunningly around, he laid his staff of office on the elevated mat beside the entrance, and stretched himself full length on it also; be it known, this being a place for some trusty slave, that may be always ready and obedient to his imperious master's call, and also to prevent the intrusion of improper guests.

The priests had removed the sacred emblems, and the saloon was stripped of its paraphernalia—the distressed Felix stood alone, like the poison tree of Java, to be admired for its beauty, but shunned for its contamination.

Our friend Tabel had hardly taken his

station, before some one was summoned by the caliph's command to attend, who until now, and during the departure of the court, had been in earnest and close conversation with Sebastian; however, the little man did not choose to hear, but feigned sleep—for what purpose we shall discover anon.

The caliph repeated his demand to know who waited, when Nulac entered, and stood in silence to await his orders. Elmuton then commanded him to send on the instant some four or six of his trusty Arab slaves.

The officer bowed, and withdrew, when the father, turning and looking terribly on his son, exclaimed—"Now, thou recreant, hear thy doom; for though without the pale of our just laws thou hast so craftily thy life secured, that it is not safe to shed thy blood, I will send thee on such a pilgrimage, as shall make thee in thy faith be sainted."

Felix, without betraying very distress-

ing emotions, answered—"If you would be merciful, be brief; and in your tender kindness let my wife share the fate I must bear: it were mercy in thee to send such kindred souls to paradise."

Sebastian, when he heard this, looked full in the caliph's face, and gave a half laugh, conveying derision in its most painful meaning; then placing his hands behind him, walked towards the door, as if to hide his mockery.

Elmuton caught the strain, and more tauntingly continued to the oppressed youth—"Oh, but thou canst not be a perfect Christian until thou hast made the pilgrimage to your holy sepulchre, and bent in true devotion the supplicating knee, to make thee firm and upright in thy belief."

The unhappy young man was about to reply to this evil sarcasm with some warmth; but recollecting it would avail him nothing, and but irritate his malignant disposers, he drew himself erect, as

mantled with conscious innocence, and retired to the upper part of the saloon.

Sebastian now marshalled the slaves ordered by the caliph to his master's presence. These were four black renegadoes, such as are at all times kept by the eastern despots for the most diabolical and hellish purposes: their countenances bespoke their calling, and their figure and ferocious bearing declared their willingness and capability to perform the worst of deeds.

As they approached their master, they bent with savage courtesy, and awaited his commands, when the viceroy addressed them as follows:—"Fellows, I have a task for you to perform, which, if it is well done, will give you freedom, wealth, and honours."

To which the leader of these black guards replied, with a hoarse and malignant voice—"You cannot name a task, that for all these we would not undertake."

Sebastian then caught up the thread of

discourse, and, in a significant manner, said to them—"Your race have often bled, and been scourged by Christian thieves, when they, in the madness of their folly, have sought Jerusalem; wouldst not like to be revenged?"

To which the savage replied, with a horrid grin—"Oh, such a task as that would please the spirits of our departed fathers! To have my revenge on the dogs, would I sell my future hope, and stand my chance for that that is to come. Oh, it would please our gods, and give us blessed peace!"

Elmuton commanded them to attend his orders, which were in these words:—"Mark then what I will have thee do; when this midnight hour shall come, take thou that Christian dog called Felix, and conduct him as far as the plains of Thebes. But, mark me well—he is a Christian, so help him not—nor halt, nor meat, nor drink, must thou with him partake: and if he falls, even there let him lie; but

bring thou to me such proof that you have not laid violent, mischievous hands upon him, to save our laws and bring to you reward. A stout sumpter mule shall be prepared for each of you good fellows, and in by-paths and unfrequented roads leave the city cautiously; but suffer him not, upon your lives, to hold communion with any one. From this time be ye his guards, and with good vigilance your duty do." When this horrid charge was delivered, the caliph turned to Sebastian, and said—" There, honest officer, be the city in thy keeping this night; take thou the keys, for no one so well can this important duty sustain."

His officer, with the humility of a sycophant, replied—" To keep my master's love and confidence will I be diligent in this great trust."

The caliph once more turned on his denounced victim, and eyeing him with the ferociousness of a chained beast, when disappointed of his prey, addressed him with

all the angry fire of his soul, mixed with the bitterest irony—"Now," said he—"now, holy pilgrim, you may depart on your sacred journey. These shall be your guards. You cannot say I sent you unattended; and as a further observance of your duty, will see you are properly provided with a humble suit, becoming your errand. A cross shall dangle on thy accursed breast; the scrip and band shall grace thy carcase; and for thy further comfort, a rosary shall gird thy loins. Oh, the temples of thy faith will ring with prayers for thy safety; and when thou diest, thy sainted image and thy name will be a theme for hymns, and an object for devotion."

Tabel had now heard enough; he slided from his couch, and crawled cautiously, on all fours, along the floor, lest he should be observed; then gliding from behind one spacious pillar to the other, until he came to a private aperture, that carried him into the garden of the harem.

The wretched Felix heard his dreadful doom announced, with a fortitude he little supposed he was master of. He replied not, nor did he betray any symptoms of horror by his behaviour; his arms were folded, and he occasionally lifted his eyes to heaven, as firm and secure in his belief, to find deliverance there. Sebastian took the arm of his master, and was evidently endeavouring to draw him away; and as they passed slowly towards the caliph's door, Felix's fortitude forsook him, and he exclaimed, in a voice that would have moved the most obdurate heart—"But say, oh, for Heaven's sake! my wife—my Orinda! you will not dare to tear me from her thus, until I have taken my last eternal farewell? As you hope for mercy hereafter, for thy immortal soul's sake, tear me not thus cruelly away from every tie that binds me to the earth!"

The inhuman and deluded father was about to turn, when his officer prevented him, and he vociferated as he departed—

"Thou dog, I banish thee from old Cairo's bounds—so far I have a right by law, and so far will act!" They then disappeared from the view of the distracted Felix.

Our unhappy subject of narrative stood petrified and motionless as stone, and looked a monument of melancholy. The Arabs hustled together, and appeared delighted in their new engagement; they chuckled and grinned in frightful exultation, forming a group, such as may be imagined of evil spirits when they have worked upon the mind of some weak and unwatchful man, and set him upon a dreadful and soul-destroying deed. Their loud whisperings and frequent turnings on their charge, at length aroused him; he had before but little noticed them; what then must be his horror as he contemplated their visages, and found himself alone with, and wholly in the power of, such fiend-looking beings! but as desperation will catch at a bubble, so Felix approached his guards. They made a dead set as he ad-

vanced, and fixed their eyes like basilisks upon him; the contrast cannot be described. The poor youth, in a mild and heart-rending manner, surveyed the countenance of each by turns; then pleading to him who seemed to be their leader, said —"Oh! if you are a man, or have one tender shade of pity in your whole composition, shall I not, for the mercy of Heaven, see once again my beloved, distressed wife?"

The monster stared full in his face, and, with a ghastly distortion of his mouth, turned away. Felix in the same way appealed by turn to the others, and in turn met the same barbarous and appalling treatment. He then fetched a deep sigh, and throwing himself in an agony of thought on a couch, left his keepers to triumph in their brutality.

CHAPTER VII.



—— ——Deformity is daring,
It is its essence to o'ertake mankind
By heart and soul, and make itself the equal—
Ay, the superior of the rest. There is
A spur in its half movements, to become
All that the others cannot, in such things
As still are free to both, to compensate
For stepdame Nature's avarice at first.
They woo with fearless deeds the smiles of fortune,
And oft, like Timour, the lame Tartar, win them.

LORD BYRON.

AFTER Monrod left the house of Selinus in the morning, and had made the arrangements, which were the subject of a former chapter, the good Christian father repaired to the chamber of his afflicted daughter, and administered comfort to her distresses, by recounting all that had passed between him and the friendly Turk; and when the fair sufferer found he whom her whole

soul doted on was safe, and likely in so short a time to bless her sight again, she became tranquil, and entered with avidity on the preparations for their midnight departure.

All was in readiness long ere the sun had gone down, and with restlessness was the hand of the dial traced from minute to minute, from hour to hour, and yet a dreadful space seemed to remain. As the time escaped, and the eventful period drew nearer, sometimes the doting parent would beguile the space, by drawing delightful pictures in anticipation, and tracing the delusive path of hope. Thus would old Affection say, taking the hand of his beloved daughter in his—"Come, cheer thee, cheer thee, sweet heart, it is not yet the hour to be alarmed. Having that you so much love for so short time, you think it lost when it is out of sight; a few short hours more and all will be well! yes, my dearly-beloved Orinda, we shall be blessed in other climes; and in my latter days, as I

am gliding to the grave, I shall be made happy, I hope, in thy offspring, when they shall skip about my knees, as playful as the infant gnats that sport their hour in the sunbeams of an April evening."

At this moment the burst of rejoicing was so great from the palace and citadel, as almost to shake that part of the town called Old Cairo, situated on the banks of the Nile, and inhabited chiefly by Christians and Jews, who are the principal traffickers of this sublime and highly-gifted country, yet so shamefully neglected by the indolence of its natural inhabitants. As the clang of cannon, trumpets, and gongs, vibrated on the river, and through the air, it struck terror to the hearts of Orinda and her parent, and made them sicken with apprehension for the future fate of him who was the cause.

Scarce had the din died away, or the Christian father and daughter overcome the emotions arising from it, when their privacy was broken in upon by the hasty

and abrupt entering of Monrod in breathless agitation. As he made his way into the chamber, he stopped on the threshold, and said, by way of opening his errand as cautiously as possible—"The good man that hath sorrow to impart should find some tender preface for his theme; but when the purport requires haste, much talk is vain, and but loss of precious time."

Orinda started from her seat, as though she anticipated unpleasant tidings, and exclaimed—"To be brief then is charity; fear not, good man, to give utterance to what thy bosom is charged withal, for mine has become so used to suspense of late, and imaginary evils, I think the worst of real can shake it little now."

"Prepare then for the worst," replied the old soldier, "for I shall strike so hard upon the chords of thy heart, that the vibration will shake thy very inmost soul. Know then," he continued, "the caliph has discovered the marriage and apostacy of his son, and but for my arm, would have

slayed him, in his rage, on the spot; but that he has become a Christian, the laws do save his life; but banishment for ever, I fear, will be his fate."

Orinda clasped her hands, in a strange mixture of feeling, and cried—"Banishment!—oh, banishment will be bliss!"

Selinus caught the sound, and in an ecstacy followed—"Banishment *shall* be bliss indeed! Now, my poor children, will we hence together.—Thy laws, my generous Turk, dare not, nor shall not detain us here: I will freely give whatever the state is indebted to me, and will openly and fearlessly leave this polluted city."

"On no pretence whatever would I have thee linger here," replied Monrod—"it were dangerous; Elmuton has those about him will so fan the flame of his resentment, that laws, human or divine, will not protect thee against his kindled hatred. This horrid storm burst in open council, and is publicly known: that hell-born viper, Sebastian, brought it so craftily to

birth, that none living shall dare to bruise its head, or stem the progress of the fearful rage it hath begot. I would have thee, for thy lives' sake, away at once, for one there is who, with Argus eyes, will narrowly watch us all——"

Selinus interrupted him, and said—"But thou, my sincere and honest friend, shall with us too; Cairo is now no resting-place for thy aged head; my poor widowed child's bosom shall be the pillow for our old grief to repose in; hand in hand will we, in strangers' land, together to the grave."

"That must not be, thou good and worthy man," answered Monrod: "I thank thee, from my soul, for thy kind consideration; but the few remaining days of my life will I devote to the aid of my mistaken and abused master; beside, while I breathe have I sworn to cherish the hope of revenge on the head of that incarnate devil Sebastian!—yes, I will stay, and whatever be my fate, will I faithfully

keep my watch; and if I sink without gratifying my appetite, let men call it by what name they will, or seeing the delusion vanish from Elmuton's eyes, I shall but die, in the fashion of the world, a disappointed man."

"Disappointed!" vociferated Selinus; "shall I hear a man talk of being disappointed of revenge so just?—no! was he my greatest enemy, would I help to accomplish a wish like this. The Christians in the city are numerous, and all to me as a brother sworn in love.—Poor child!" said he, turning to Orinda, who stood mute and motionless, "poor thing! for thee will I find a resting-place secure, until this old arm shall help to hurl retribution on the foe of my friend!"

Orinda had wrestled violently with contending passions during the discourse of her father and Monrod; but this last address to her had aroused her as her parent had never before witnessed. She parted her disordered ringlets from her forehead,

then crossing her hands, and pressing fervently her bosom, said, in an amazonian voice—"Rest! would my father talk to me of rest?—oh, that were vain! I feel myself unsexed—dire revenge hath turned the milk of my nature to bitterest gall! the famed acts by Roman dames of old achieved, shall be but play-tricks to what I will perform, if on the devoted head of my beloved and injured Felix a single hair they bruise! Come, my father, nerve thyself for such doing, as shall make this proud caliph tremble!"

Monrod answered to this vehement vent of feeling, with great warmth and much concern—"Hold, woman, hold!" said he; "if you give offence, or by any outrage break the laws, and at this time too, when rancour is grown so ripe, the occasion will answer the purpose of your enemies, and you will be the Christians' murderer."

Old Selinus too was alarmed at his daughter's intemperance; and in a tone that somewhat softened her impetuosity,

said—" For the mercy of Heaven, my child, be calm! Some trusty and well-tried friends, that I have near at hand, shall at each outlet of the city closely watch, that we may learn the destination of our beloved and injured Felix."

Mónrod then again advised them to leave Cairo on the instant; gave them his blessing, and saying he must now depart, for should his absence be observed, it might create a suspicion, and mar his future prospects of serving them; and as he was leaving the apartment, a servant entered, with a sort of note or letter, which he delivered to Selinus, with these words—" A strange, curious, and mysterious-looking man, much muffled up in a dark pelisse, in breathless haste, spoke not, but rudely thrust this into my hand; then glancing his eyes cautiously around, made his way with much speed."

Selinus eagerly snatched the scroll, and, in some alarm, read aloud the following:—

" Selinus, if life is worth your keeping,

instantly, with your daughter, quit this town. The citadel gates are now closing. Four guards are appointed to leave at midnight with the banished Felix. *Avoid*, but *watch* Sebastian."

Selinus, much agitated, exclaimed—"Can you, my good friend, trace the writer of this by the characters? to me they are unknown; but it evidently comes from some anxious and secret friend."

As Monrod traced the contents, he replied—"Well indeed I know the characters; they are from the hand of Tabel, the eunuch dwarf. I must now no longer stay; the prophet have ye in his holy keeping!" He then precipitately left the house.

The anticipated and important hour now was drawing near, that was proposed for many Christians, as well as those connected with our narrative, to leave the city of Cairo. The government of Elmuton had of late been so much abused, and such unwarrantable extortions practised on the

traders by the officers of the viceroy, that it was no sooner whispered in their private circles that Selinus, whom they named in common their father, was about to quit Egypt, than applications were made by numerous tried friends to accompany him. In fact, many had already dropped down the river, in open boats, &c., to prevent observation, or elude suspicion, that the destined vessel might overtake and receive them more securely on board.

As the appointed hour drew at hand, and the place fixed for the general meeting being a private quay at Bulac, several friends called at the house of Selinus. Indeed, so few were the Turkish inhabitants in this part, that it was neither so closely watched, nor narrowly guarded, as other and more interior parts of the town. Beside, a little stir or bustle among the Christians in the night, seldom much disturbed the Turks, who retired sooner, and rose earlier, both from religious tenets and custom, except in times of revelling and merry-making.

Great was the surprise and disappointment among the friends, when they learned, from Selinus and Orinda, what had happened. Little discussion, however, took place as to their future proceedings, for no sooner was it requested by Selinus that some few should assist him to discover what road the object of their solicitude was to be taken, than a universal and spontaneous offer of services was volunteered. He then desired them, when that should be satisfactorily ascertained, that they would leave the land of their oppressors, every thing being so properly prepared; as for himself and daughter, no consideration whatever should prevent them from following their beloved Felix, that ultimately he might be wrested from the cruelty and oppression he at present laboured under. The visitors then left the father and daughter, and proceeded upon their secret mission, and to make the observations necessary to the comfort of their friends.

When Selinus and Orinda were again left alone, they threw off as much as possible their despondency, and summoned all their fortitude to back their enterprise. They agreed that strong mules for each should be instantly prepared, and in readiness for their departure; but what disguise to travel in the most likely to elude detection, and least inconvenience them, or draw on them the notice of the various wandering hordes of robbers and freebooters, that so much annoy travellers and infest the country, for a time puzzled their inventions; when Orinda's ingenuity concluded it would be best to lightly encumber their beasts with a small quantity of the meanest merchandize, and have about their persons only such a quantity of gold and silver as might prevent disappointment, in case they should be stopped by the wandering gentry, and thus preserve their lives or save further molestation on their way. Their bulk of wealth, which was great in value but small in di-

mensions, this they would, somehow or other, conceal about their persons, or in the baggage of their mules. She then besought her father to prepare thus far without delay, and also to habit himself in mean attire, while she would do the same, so as to appear his son, as the male habiliments would be much the most convenient, and, for many considerations, be the best security for her sex. This plan was agreed on at once, and at once they set about putting it into execution.

At parting, Orinda took her father's hand affectionately, and said—"Now, my father, I will put on such disguise as shall befit our purpose; and in our perils, if I lag, or shew the weakness of my sex, rebuke me thus—say that I have ceased to love my injured Felix, and forgot my duty to my father; do this—it will spur me on to more than mortal bearing; your daughter must not live to see her husband mocked."

When Monrod left the house of Seli-

nus, he made the utmost speed possible, to gain the citadel ere the gates should be closed; and also he wished, at the same time, to be present at that ceremony, as that service was usually performed by him. Indeed it was his post of honour, as his title of rank bespoke—"Captain of the guard."

As he was making his way through a dark, narrow, and sandy street, something impeded his path. At first he supposed it was a large black dog, grovelling in the dust for such offal as might there be thrown by the inhabitants—for the streets of Cairo at all times abound with innumerable half-starved creatures of this kind; and such a veneration do the Turks hold for *cats*, that sometimes a family will mourn for days at the death of one of their feline favourites. If the master of a house enters, or a visitor, of ever so great consequence, is shewn to the best couch, and finds it previously occupied by Grimalkin, she is removed with the greatest caution, or suf-

fered to remain unmolested; and the midnight harmony, or rather discord, of these caterwaulers, so fill the streets of Cairo with their disagreeable din, that an European, not used to it, might suppose ten thousand *Whittingtons* had lately imported their cargoes.

But to return to the supposition of Monrod—he was about to strike the object of its impediment, when it raised itself on tis legs, and saluted him thus—" Oh, good seignior Monrod, my worthy friend, we have met most opportunely! I have been to inform the Christian merchant, Selinus, of the great danger he is in, if he remains with his daughter in this town. I procured a key, and let myself out a private way from the garden of the harem, and meant to return the same; but, unfortunately, running with uncommon speed, two fighting curs crossed my path, and threw me headlong some distance into the road, and almost smothered me in dust; and in my alarm have lost the

precious key, which, if I find not again, shall have the gates closed on me, and my poor head must answer for my good intentions."

Monrod could scarcely forbear laughing, with all his troubles, at the woful plight of his unlucky friend Tabel. I suppose the reader had guessed before this who was the sand-disturbing hero: and as he was about to assist in the search, a trumpet sounded the second signal for the gates to close. He had yet some distance to go, and not a moment to spare; he therefore left the little man, up to his middle in dust and in a violent fit of sneezing, produced by the rising particles, to make the best of the way he could.

The little dingy, dust-bedaubed dwarf no sooner saw his brother officer leaving him in so abrupt and hasty a manner, than he scampered after, making such a cloud of dust, that, had it been day, would have darkened the atmosphere, crying out at the same time, in a loud sort of whisper,

for the assistance of his comrade, to help him in his speed. Monrod, however, was soon out of sight, and had just made his entrance good within the portico as the guards were descending, headed by Sebastian. The veteran was somewhat chagrined at this, but turned up a by-path, to prevent an unpleasant encounter, and also to avoid suspicion, that might arise if the knowledge of his departure from the walls should come to the ear of his rival.

The soldiers had now arrived at the portal, the sentry was set, and the massive gates being closed, when, puffing and blowing, making as much noise to obtain his breath as a horse that is touched in the wind, and called, by those gentlemen who make dealing in that useful animal their profession, a "roarer," little Tabel had just time to thrust himself between, and narrowly escaped a confounded squeezing.

The searching eye of Sebastian soon caught the figure of our friend, and in a

voice that bespoke the authority of all his officers combined, demanded to know what thing that was, that dared so rudely to pass at the moment of the closing?

Tabel answered not, for the best of reasons—it was impossible—he had no breath for words. His silence was quite enough to raise jealous thoughts in Sebastian, who commanded his men to strip the being, and see what they there had got—whether it was a baboon escaped from the royal menagerie, or a dancing dog run away from its master.

The little man could hear, though he could not speak, and throwing off his dusty covering, with an air of insulted dignity, stood before the great man.

Little did Sebastian expect to see Tabel, and a thousand distrustful ideas flashed across his mind; he demanded of him, in an unceremonious and austere manner, what business drew him without the walls at that unseasonable hour?

Our dwarf, purposely to recover him-

self and his breath also, and to prepare an answer at the same time, took some short space to blow the dust from his nostrils, and wipe it from his eyes; then gulping and spitting by turns, until he had collected himself sufficiently, and almost tired the patience of those who beheld his manœuvres, he at last said—"Seignior Sebastian, I have been on business of some importance, and fearful that you might be disturbed if the gates were closed on me, have so hurried myself, that I know not what the consequence may be. But, however, I have executed my commission, and if I die in the service of those I love, it will but be that I have properly done my duty."

To this the officer answered, with a malignant lower of his heavy brows—"You are a cunning knave, and I do mistrust you for a go-between.—Guards, bind the deformed devil, and throw him in a dungeon, as deep as that which confines his father Lucifer.—If you cannot

make it appear on the morrow, that your commission was to serve your master, I will hang you, like a fawning cur as you are, and then throw your carcase to your four-footed fellow-creatures, to banquet and snarl over."

To which savage sentence Tabel replied, with some consequence—"Noble officer, it grieves me more to fall under thy displeasure, than the apprehension of undergoing the fate you would inflict upon me; for I can make it so clearly appear, that what I have this night done was but my duty, therefore I tremble not at the consequences."

"Then say," vociferated Sebastian, "what was thy errand, or my orders shall on the instant be put in force."

At this the little man cleared his throat with a loud hem, and with a face as brazen as the modern naked Achilles, answered—"You know, great captain, the sentence of our royal master on that arch hypocrite Felix. It is decreed, that he

should have some parts of his dress to appear Christian-like, and not having any of their polluted trash within our holy walls, I have been among the Christian traders, to procure a cross, and such ridiculous trappings as they in their custom are wont to wear, that all things may be in readiness when the hour shall arrive that is to rid us for ever of such barefaced infamy."

Sebastian eyed him from head to foot with a hard-believing survey, and hastily inquired where the things he so diligently sought after were concealed, as he saw them not about his person.

To which question the dwarf answered, drawing his figure upright to its highest pitch of elevation, and throwing his head back in a very consequential manner—"I had hoped my master had thought better of his slave; does he think I am become so lost in faith, that I should labour under the weight of such detested emblems? No, no, thanks to the prophet's care, I

am not so far polluted! a slave that accompanied me hastened on before me with the burthen, and must, ere this, have reached my private apartments."

This swaggering lie, delivered with so hopeful a grace, perfectly did his business in the way he intended it should. The great officer seemed to be obliged to be convinced, much against his will, and he abruptly bade the dwarf hence, and finish the work he had begun, and to meet him as soon as possible in the octagon court of the castle.

We need not say how joyfully the little lying lump scampered off, after so narrow an escape; but it may be needful to give some little information, how it was possible he would be able to cover the falsehood he had so boldly asserted. We have already said, in a former part of this forest of vowels and consonants, syllables and monosyllables, winding phrases and crooked metaphors, that the Mahometans, once a year, hold the feast, or fast, or some-

thing very like both, of the Ramadan, which is a public fast and festival not much dissimilar to what is observed by those of another, and of course a more enlightened faith; and among other amusements of the time, public masquerades are frequent; and by way of diversion, the Turks will sometimes assume the dress of a Christian, and go through many ceremonies, by them observed, with the greatest mock solemnity. Tabel, in the various occupations of his professions, was general wardrobe-keeper of the harem, and consequently had some of the above-named dresses in his custody: this thought struck his fertile mind on the emergency, and how well it answered his purpose has already appeared.

CHAPTER VIII.



It is a gloomy space, for men to think
The very tide when troubled spirits work;
And dark imagination hatches,
To give birth to deeds that should no record bear,
Or puzzle time to say when they were born.

Original.

Hark! what sound was that which struck upon the ear, and, with such solemnity, charging the surrounding air? It is the hollow gong, announcing the fatal hour of midnight—fatal alike to the fond father, tender-loving wife, heart-broken, affectionate son and husband! All now is still, where, so short time since, the sounds of revelry and boisterous clamour were so conspicuously heard and invaded the distant silence. The palace, shining like a brilliant meteor, illuminating the misty atmosphere, now is scarcely visible in the

dark expanse; the busy buzzing streets, glaring with hues of light, varied in colours as the heavenly token-bow: here and there are faintly perceived a passing torch, whose solitary gleam adds to the dreariness of the scene. All nature seems to have received some sudden shock; the passing winds move imperceptibly, and the stars twinkle, as trembling in security. The waters too how hushed! with heaving swells the current passes on, and playful waves no more kiss the pebbled shore, and cause a rustling commotion there: the dog, as fearful in his watch, bays not the silent tide, nor awakens echo with his howl: the calendar of time seems closed, as if afraid to record some dire event.

Ah! see the strange apathy is now disturbed, the darkened gloom partially dispersed, and activity, in a fearful shape, awakened—see the insulted victim of a villain's jealousy, the unfortunate Felix, pale as despair could paint him, conducted by his brutal guards down a flight of

steps into the court below, to have indignity crowned with insult. Sebastian, with a savage gratification living on his countenance, attended only by a few of his picked creatures, formed a guard to the unhappy youth, who was placed between the four Arabs especially appointed by the caliph.

When the frightful cavalcade reached the centre of the court, where were placed four mules, and Tabel attending with the Christian habit, Felix seemed too much absorbed with his own thoughts to notice any one else. A deathlike silence reigned; the few guards formed a circle around the wretched outcast, and poor Tabel stood, as unwilling to begin the ceremony of dressing. Sebastian, at length, as if he wished to get rid of the commission, stepped forward, and holding his cimeter aloft, said, with a sullen voice—"Prepare!"

The Arabs, with alacrity, mounted their beasts, and drew their weapons; little Tabel tremblingly placed the cowl and

vest on his still secretly well-beloved young friend, and seemed dreadfully afraid lest any one should offer to assist; he then tied the waist with a cord, and suspended a small rosary. Still did Felix remain seemingly unmindful of the mockery. The dwarf had now done as much as was needful for his own security, and fell without the circle.

Sebastian, as if to stimulate his men to further insult, gave a kind of half-laugh, and turned away with the most direct meaning of ribaldry. The creatures of the man in office then grounded their arms, and with a deal of mock pomp, knelt on one knee, after the Christian fashion, and with one voice exclaimed—"Good pilgrim, give us thy blessing! holy penitent, vouchsafe thy benediction!" and such like language, used with the greatest effrontery, until tired with insult, their officer once more drew near, and in a voice that would have struck horror to a heart pos-

sessed of the least spark of humanity, cried —" March!"

The bustle created in this preparation seemed completely to arouse the wretched youth to a sense of his situation; he stretched himself erect, and folding his arms on his breast, cast a look around, as to bid farewell for ever to the place that gave him birth, and to the spot that had of late witnessed his strange vicissitudes. His countenance wore a deadly paleness, his young beard, which, when his face beamed with gladness, was hardly perceptible, now appeared of a straggling length; his fine eyes were sunk, and that form, which so recently captivated, now was void of every charm; the rose of pleasure seemed as blighted for ever, and the sweet fragrance of love overpowered with cankering care. That form where lived young delight, that face which so lately was the fair and open titlepage to a mind generous and charitable, now commanded only, from those whose hearts were not totally

frozen to the softer claims, commiseration and sincere pity.

The cavalcade moved on to a gate that was but little frequented and called—"The Jerusalem Gate." They passed—when Sebastian eagerly closed the portal, turned the ponderous key, and with a savage air of gratification thrust it into his girdle. With rapidity then the frightful squadron hastened to their quarters.

Tabel's first visit was to Monrod, whom he found sitting alone in his apartment, buried in reverie. Our dwarf used no preliminary observations at his entrance, but at once threw himself on a mat, and burst into a loud fit of weeping. The old soldier too well guessed the cause, and could not help catching the infection; but, as though ashamed to unman himself, by letting the generous flood be discovered, he hid his face in the pillow of his couch, but declared, by his frequent and loud sobs, what he inwardly endured.

The restless night passed thus between

these two extremes of human composition. Oh, how often does silent sympathy convey more real affection and commiseration than vain fangled volubility, and gives a greater balm to distress! I hate the man that will come and break the sore of my affliction, by a fulsome repetition of my troubles—talk of the many and valuable qualities of that which I have lost; thus harassing my most acute feelings, insulting my recollection, and torturing my remembrance; either thinking me too callous for retrospection, or insensible to anticipation.

The route taken by the guards of the unhappy Felix was the least frequented of any leading to or from Cairo, it being that chiefly used by the Christian merchants, consequently it was only at stated periods much of a thoroughfare. They however had not proceeded far, before they were discovered by the friends of Selinus, who immediately guessed their destination, and hastened to give the wished-for informa-

tion, which was no sooner known than Orinda and her father prepared to take their departure; but not by the same road, it being now the time of year that the heat rendered it impossible to travel far during the day, and at night it was necessary to find some place of shelter, as the season for the "fifty winds" was near, and then it is both dangerous and troublesome to proceed; for often is the traveller overtaken in this strange but beautiful country by storms of wind, which carry the sand in such awful clouds as sometimes to bury whole caravans, render the atmosphere dark, and the sun invisible for a time.

Selinus with his daughter left the city in the disguise they had proposed, accompanied a short distance by several of their friends. The father and daughter then pursued a track along the bank of the Nile, intending on the following evening to change their course, and cut across the country into the supposed direction that Felix was being conveyed.

Here for a while we must leave those sundered friends, and return back to see what will next be doing at the caliph's castle and parts adjacent.

Two or three days only had passed since Sebastian had returned to power and command; yet so full charged had been that space with events of various casts, that better it had never existed to blot the calendar of time. The unfortunate Mameluke prisoners were executed in the most public, ferocious, and butcher-like manner; their mangled trunks were thrown and scattered in the streets, to be destroyed by dogs, or stolen by the survivors, and privately committed to the hidden grave, while their ghastly and horror-striking heads were exposed, as dreadful examples, on the spikes that surmounted the archways of the several gates. This, however, was no new spectacle to the inhabitants of Cairo, and caused but a momentary sensation.

The palace wore a new feature entirely

from what it had of late; the soldiers were all bustle; reviews, parades, and martial operations, filled most of the hours of the day, as revelry and amusements of various sorts beguiled the early hours of night. Elmuton entered into every species of light business, or ridiculous pastimes, with a weak and unstable avidity. The melancholy fate of his two sons seemed entirely to have forsaken his memory, and whatever remained to remind him of these events, were removed by the attention and care of Sebastian, who now more than ever assumed the authority of office, and would sometimes dispatch affairs that hitherto belonged to the caliph's voice only.

Little Tabel caught the infection of the times, and seemed only to think of the present, or what might turn to his advantage in the future; he was here, there, and every where in a twinkling, as busy as a blowing fly, in the dog-days, in a tripe-shop; and as his strange infirmity was always on him when he had the most

to do, his recourse to his old remedy was consequently the more frequent; and the effect of lifting his hand so often to the neighbourhood of his chin, and throwing his head so repeatedly backwards, would now and then have such an effect upon his heels, that they forgot to do their duty, and left his body to find the nearest way to the ground; and but for old Ayesha, the governess, who occasionally laboured under the same complaint, when a convenient opportunity offered for the fit to come on, he many a time might have been made to answer for the consequences of his malady to those higher in power.

Monrod was the only member about the castle whose demeanour seemed to bear any semblance to the late distressing scenes that there had been witnessed, and by many so severely felt. The good old soldier's places of office had not been directly taken from him, yet he was not, as he was wont to be, summoned officially to his duty; still he cherished the pro-

spect, that, sooner or later, the hour for his revenge would arrive; and although he was not a villain, yet he fed upon the baneful anticipation. Many of the old soldiers loved and revered him; and Nulac was his chief companion when he chose not to be quite alone. Elmuton never omitted an opportunity to pass when he met his ancient friend and confidant, to speak kindly, or converse familiarly, thus shewing his late partiality had not entirely deserted his bosom, and where for so many years it had been cherished. Sebastian however took care his master should not often be left by him, so that those attentions were seldom more than mere courtesy.

Among all the prying inquiries of the great officer, he had not been told of the new-arrived beauty, that had made so favourable an impression on his ruler's inclinations. This news was told by Tabel one day, as he was recounting his assiduous care and unremitting attentions to his royal master's comforts, during the absence

of the gallant leader. Sebastian fed the vanity of the dwarf, by expatiating on his many good qualities, and bade him prepare the beautiful slave in his best manner, so as further to captivate the caliph, and take care to throw her in the way as often as possible; and he himself would take care his assiduity should meet its well-merited reward. It was then agreed between this human devil and little do-aught, that Elmuton should be left earlier by his attendants than common that evening at sherbet-drinking, for the purpose of introducing the captivating Zoa, in all the charms that art or nature could invent. This confidence and familiar discourse from the great man to the *little* great one, made the latter one suppose his height equal to any in the service of the viceroy, and with no small pains he endeavoured to appear so in the eyes of others. With less ceremony than usual he left his superior, to set about preparing for the evening's adventure.

The patron of this precious pair of purveyors for pleasure was beforehand with their anticipation; for as Elmuton returned from the baths, he again met Zoa, who was now dressed in all the splendour of oriental costume and magnificence. She seemed so far reconciled to her situation as not to resist the importunities of the old governante Ayesha, so as to conform to the outward shew of splendid slavery. We have heretofore said, this unfortunate captive was, in her natural appearance and behaviour, far above the common cast; but now that her general mien was assisted by artificial means, she looked like another Cleopatra, when that arch queen chose to put on the mask of modesty, to hide the deformity of her vicious mind; but Zoa wore no mask; she had sworn to be virtuous, and she was so. How well she may adhere to her oath, perhaps may be disclosed in proper time; however, she was something quite new to Elmuton; and as he scanned her every feature, he disco-

vered fresh beauties—and as he probed her mind, found inexhaustible sources of excellence. All base advances were repulsed by her modest bearing, and froward thoughts checked by her discretion.

The caliph paced the cool saloon by her side, as attentive as an honourable lover, and attempted not to disturb her conversation, or embarrass her feeling, by any subject that might lead too closely on her present situation; but he wished and endeavoured to learn something of her past life. He frequently alluded to the various customs and manners of those she now resided with—the amusements of the harem, &c., to which observations she answered but little, nor did she seem anywise curious to be informed; but when an allusion was dropped, or a hint made, at her native land or manners, the rising tear would glisten in her long and sable eyelashes, like a dew-drop hanging on the passion-flower, when the envious sun darts its first beams to ravish the suspending pearl.

Although Elmuton was in most affairs a weak man, and easily played upon, a tyrant, and a dupe to the artifice of a villain, still he was a true lover, and passionately fond of the delightful part of creation; and when he caught the liquid index trembling on the organ of her bosom, he became determined, if possible, to peruse the contents of her heart. He then, in a cautious manner, spoke of his affections—pointed to the various enchanting females obedient to his nod, and the arbitrary law of custom.

Zoa answered him not for a time; but at length coming in front of a beautiful window of stained glass, whose brilliancy cast a thousand different hues around; and clasping her hands with fervency, exclaimed—"By yon glorious sun, that you take such pains to obscure, have I once sworn an eternal love, and never while that heavenly orb continues to shed its influence around the earth, will I cancel the register! Look on me, great caliph," she con-

tinued, throwing her majestic form at the same time with determined confidence before Elmuton, "look on me, your slave, your worst of beasts! threats, tortures, force, or kindnesses, can never sever this almost broken heart from its sacred obligation! Know me, great sultan, for a Pagan; I was taught to step from that mighty planet of light and life, to the great Creator of all things. My first plighted vows I will hold as firm as my faith; and although I am now torn for ever from the arms of him I love, still in reminiscence will I cherish that that was, and sink to my grave with hope for that that is to come!"

Elmuton had now gained thus far his wishes—he now knew her heart prepossessed; and although she was wholly in his power, still the gratification he aimed at was not likely to answer his ends if obtained by force. It was at this moment the thought struck him she might be won by degrees, and dazzled by appearances;

he therefore saluted her in a courteous manner, and bade her prepare for an evening's entertainment, when the various amusements the harem afforded should be entered into, the better to beguile her ill-cherished thoughts, and teach her to consider other countries, and those of a different faith, were not insensible to the pleasures of life, nor unmindful of proper duties. He then again recommended her to the careful charge of Ayesha, and retired.

Well did the wretched beauty comprehend the meaning of her wily lord, and as wishing to avoid the jealous gaze of her disgraced companions, who, with much mock complaisance and far-fetched compliments, congratulated her on the easy conquest she had made of their imperious master, left the vestibule, and secluded herself in the privacy of her chamber.

It had now been so long a period since Elmuton had given a fete to his ladies, it required the greater preparation to get all

things in readiness. No sooner then were the orders given for such, than the harem was one universal bustle: a consultation of the chief eunuchs were summoned, to take into their consideration first, where and in what place the assembly should congregate, the most suitable to give eclat to the entertainments, and display the magnificence of the caliph to his new favourite: various were the opinions, and numerous the places named; but no one selected; Elmuton had not fixed the spot, therefore each officer pointed out a different one, in hopes to gain praise or preferment for his selection.

In the midst of this uncertainty, the chief officer of all the eunuchs, the great captain Tabel, entered the assemblage: here he was in his own proper element—here he was all authority—and none, save the caliph himself, could call him to account. After he had received the submission of his inferiors, he threw himself, with all the consequence of the great Mo-

gul, on a rich couch at full length, resting his head on his hand, and hearing the discussion in silence for a time. All he appeared to regret was, that the space being so limited, would not allow him to indulge in all the majesty of his office. Giving a loud hem, and kicking his legs about a little, he threw his arm upwards, as a signal for silence: this was obeyed on the instant, and all eyes and ears were turned on the great man. He now took a full and contemptuous survey of all the officers, who were arranged in a circle around his couch; he then distended his lips and nostrils, blowed out his cheeks, and glared with his eyes. At length drawing himself on his breech, commanded them with authority to away with the greatest dispatch, and prepare the "Vestibule of the Waters," for the great Elmuton to hold his revels in that night with his women, in honour of his new favourite.

At this command, each officer looked at his brother with a doubt of possibility

whether or not this famed place of entertainment could be got in readiness in time sufficient, for it had not been used officially since a short period previous to the birth of the prince Felix, and the last time the sultana his mother revelled in public. But be it as it would, the order was imperative—the time but short for such an undertaking, and consequently none to spare. They then made their obeisance to the great man in office, and departed, to give counter orders, and personally assist in the preparations for this magnificent entertainment.

Tabel next repaired to the private boudoir of Mrs. Ayesha, purposely to refresh himself, after his great exertions, with her delightful conversation, or rather to enjoy a comfortable pipe of her perfumed tobacco, and quaff the ambrosial sweets, not of her lips, but of her choice liquors, that her private locker was stored withal.

All things being so far settled, the time passed in the customary manner, until the

hour fixed for the pastimes to commence. This was announced by music, and such like demonstration of joy, without the walls of the harem, as well as within the sanctum sanctorum; for it was the rule, whenever the viceroy thus banqueted, it was also a general joy-partaking for all ranks appertaining to the duty of the castle; thus a universal jollity pervaded, and when the spacious saloon, gallery, or whatever an European may call it, was viewed at first sight, it struck such a combination of wonders on the senses, as almost to bewilder the beholder.

This grand apartment was known in the court by the name of "The Vestibule of the Waters," one side being entirely enclosed by that element. It was also, on very particular occasions, used as a grand bath, such as when the sultan condescended to visit his officer, or any event of uncommon occurrence. Immense columns of crystal rose from the midst of the pure element, supporting a ceiling of waved glass, so that

that part seemed to be but a division of waters, where innumerable animated beings ranged and sported, according to the intent assigned them. Various sorts of rare and beautiful birds floated in the air, and joined in the concert, with the most ravishing sweetness, while black and white swans skimmed on the surface of the reservoir, unalarmed by the clang of music, or the dazzling of thousands of variegated lamps; and often would the feathered favourites claim the attentions of the visitors, by their familiarity, and share the dainties of the feast, from the fair hands of beauty in captivity.

Many and ingenious were the contrivances purchased from other countries of curious art, to embellish this paradise of pleasure and hell of pollution; and as the sheet of water extended beyond the walls of the building, such machines were set in motion, unobserved, and passed the more wonderful; waxen mermaids floated through the stream, their passage giving

them motion, and the appearance of reality—dolphins, spouting water in the air, causing a rippling on the surface and commotion that set many inanimate bodies in action, and appeared an ocean, *multum in parvo.*

The guards were set—most of the females assembled—and what few musicians appeared in sight, had taken their station; Elmuton entered, habited in the most magnificent costume, the brilliancy of his dress glared, as he passed, like a beautiful meteor; a general prostration followed of his dependents, all but Zoa, who acknowledged him after the custom of her own country; he early addressed her, and taking her hand in a condescending manner, led her to a rich sofa, conspicuously placed, and which had a commanding view of the whole apartment; he then seated himself by her side, when a full chorus of female voices gave the following lines, accompanied, at intervals, by music from soft-sounding instruments:—

Hail, great Love, thou god divine!
Here shed thy influence benign,
That peace may live;
Crown with bliss Elmuton's days;
Guard him with thy powerful rays,
And pleasure give.

This is Love's imperial throne,
His power we his votaries own,
And all confess,
Life without love is but a spell—
Man without love should never dwell,
Where angels bless.

Love, here triumphant rule the day;
In happy bliss we'll sport and play,
And care destroy:
All-powerful Love, too, rule the night;
Fill all our hours with sweet delight,
Without alloy.

These strains of harmony were suffered to die away, and a sort of silence followed; for without knowing where the sounds proceeded from, the senses were ravished, and almost overcome, by such soft and delicate music, producing a sensation that seemed not to arise from mortal power—even the feathered visitants became absorbed by the seductive attraction.

After a time, these sounds died gradually away, seemingly lost in the distant heavens. Now the waters became agitated; the swans, and different aquatic birds on its surface, became alarmed; the dolphins in quick succession passed and repassed—all bore the appearance of an impending storm: this however was suffered to be but momentary, and to cause a contrast. The instruments now struck up a lively and fascinating tune, and soon on the floor were seen seven beautiful dancing girls with tambourines; when they had performed several evolutions, they were joined by seven more with castanets, then seven more with cymbals, all dressed with the same precision, but whose action and attitudes seemed more to disgust than please the beautiful Zoa, as not the least smile of gratification beamed on her countenance.

These now passed on, and were succeeded by dwarfs of the most ugly and forbidding aspect, both as to natural and

artificial defects; it was however wonderful to witness their agility, as they went through many exhibitions of buffoonery.

Here followed a suspension of amusements, save music, which kept the softer passions in full play, while perfumed waters were sprinkled on all present, and the censers fresh trimmed with delightful fragrance; sweetmeats and fruits were lavishly handed round to the company, with lemonade, and such sort of drinks, strongly impregnated with spices, to add to the duties of love.

Elmuton was unremitting in his attentions to Zoa, who with a sort of grateful acknowledgment returned his civilities. The viceroy was much puzzled by her deportment; but the more he was in her company, the more was he captivated. And again he was now childless; Zoa was young and virtuous, that he firmly believed: his years he found not oppressive, nor were they in fact so, according to human restriction. A thousand ideas shook

his rebel propensities, and he was forced to admire her behaviour.

Promenade or chitchat was now the order in this assemblage of beautiful and elegantly-dressed females; cheerfulness now reigned around, and whatever cankering sorrow might prey within their lovely bosoms, the general feature now was joy; some approached the margin of the water, and enjoyed the gambols of the fowls, and oft would create a kind of race, by throwing into the pool delicious fragments, to be striven for by the feathered favourites.

The tinkling of a small silver bell, from a different part of the vestibule, now drew the attention, and announced a fresh species of entertainments; all eyes were turned in full expectation, when a loud scream from the reservoir caused as quick an opposite turn, to ascertain the cause. Those females that were near, when they beheld what was the matter, shrieked also—the

whole company became alarmed, and rushed towards the spot of catastrophe.

Elmuton, being so elevated, saw the whole, by merely rising in his seat; he commanded all persons whatever to fall back some distance, and on no account to render any assistance.

This order satisfied many, and Zoa in particular, who supposed some serious accident had befallen, and had therefore become uneasy.

But how shall we relate this dire mishap? It appears our friend Tabel, with the governess Ayesha, for some purpose or other which they in their judgment thought fit, had retired behind one of the large pillars, and close on the brink of the water. They had been observed there some time by several of the young officers: Tabel was reclining with his back against the column, and Ayesha in his front, with her back to the water: how it came to pass we never could rightly inform ourselves; suffice it to say, the old gover-

nante finding herself going beyond her equilibrium, suddenly caught hold of her friend, the officer, for support, when they were both precipitated headlong into the cool element.

It was so momentary an immersion to the man kind of a creature, he had no time to call for assistance; but Ayesha finding she must inevitably descend, squalled as loud as her lungs would convey sound, and thus caused the disturbance in the assembly. Now the good mistress had been, in the early part of her time, a tolerably well-made sort of a woman, rather above the middle stature, consequently when she gained her legs, and found the bottom of the bath, her head and shoulders were full above the surface, the water being about four feet deep: not so fortunate was the poor little officer, who being at his full height, as we before have said, only three feet four inches, so that when he touched the bottom, he wanted some distance ere he could reach another element. He had

lost his turban in the fall, and before he could make his holding good on the garments of his fellow-sufferer, he was forced to keep bobbing his naked head up at intervals to gain his breath, and sputter and blow like an infant whale; but when he had once made his gripe fast on the shoulder of the old woman, he gave a spring, and threw his legs around her waist, then fastening his hands tight round her neck, thus was safely seated on her protruding stomach.

The first shock of the terrified swans being over, they now for a moment eyed this precious pair of turtledoves as intruders on their element, and *sans ceremonie* made a furious and general attack, battering them with their wings and beaks, so as nearly to upset the half-drowned devils.

Things now began to wear rather a serious aspect, and assistance became absolutely necessary; three or four slaves now plunged in, and rescued the assailed from the angry assailants.

When the pair were safely landed, a hearty laugh from Elmuton gave a licence to the inferiors, who tittered loudly at the pitiful appearance of their captain.

This was too much for the bearing of any thing human that had authority on his back, however bare it might be of robes: the little man felt this indignity more than his dousing, and regardless of the presence, let his anger get the mastery of his manners, for he so laid about the slaves, the women, or officers, and indeed all that came to hand, with his wet turban and well-soaked long satin sleeves, that a clear way was made for him presently to make his exit. Poor Ayesha being obliged to bear such a burthen of flesh and blood whilst in the water, being once more on *terra firma*, felt the full weight of her misfortunes; she therefore went off into a sort of fit, and was carried decently to her dormitory.

When this ludicrous scene had passed over, and order once more restored, the

revels of the evening recommenced; several exhibitions of dancing dogs, learned monkeys, &c. helped to fill out the space. It was now perceptible Elmuton began to be uneasy and fidgety from some cause or other. His eyes were almost constantly on Zoa, who maintained her reserve with becoming perseverance, neither courting attention, nor giving offence by non-attendance to the many courtesies offered her.

The various musical instruments now combined their full force, and made the vestibule tremble with their power. Presently, on the floor, in front of the royal seat, appeared a group of half-naked men, after the fashion of what we call savages, with all their implements of sport, war, or hunting; these were supposed to be just entering on the chase; and when they began their various ceremonies and Pagan observances, Zoa appeared much discomposed, and evidently struggled with her feelings to an alarming degree; but when

their rude dance, in which they proved their weapons, commenced, she could hold no longer, but burst into a violent flood of tears.

The caliph was alarmed, and pressed much to know the cause. For a time this was evaded; but as the action continued, she became the more distressed, and begged leave to retire: this was politely refused, without the reason should be ascertained: she then, with frankness, declared to the viceroy, that this exhibition so much reminded her of her own country, and those so dear, and yet now lost for ever to her, that her tortured recollection quite overpowered her other senses.

Elmuton saw and pitied her distress, and generously withdrew with the fair sufferer; nor did he leave her until she gained her own apartment—nor then, without making fresh protestations of honourable love; he, in a manly manner, yet with tenderness, begged her to consider her situation, and painted, in the most

flattering terms, what she might command, and what an elevated station she might fill; to all which she answered with her usual determined frankness. He then left her, and retired to his own apartment full of contrary emotions.

The revels now broke up, and the castle once more became tranquil.

CHAPTER IX.



'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
Of fleeting life its sweetness and perfume;
And we are weeds without it. COWPER.

It will be recollected, in a former chapter our friend Tabel spoke of a refractory male slave, that somewhat disturbed the market, and was purchased by Conrod, the caliph's garden-keeper, on the same morning he made so good a bargain for the lovely Zoa: as this personage may peradventure have something to do of consequence in the future contents of our history, romance, legendary novel, or whatever you, my gentle reader (yes, gentle reader—that is the common phrase now-a-days), may please to call it, we shall endeavour to give a sketch of his birth, parentage, and education, as near as it is

possible, considering all difficulties appertaining thereunto.

Some short period previous to the date that gave birth to the adventures we are now recording, the Philippines were discovered; thither many countries sent out whatever they considered might turn to their advantage; but after all, it was not what they took out they looked to for their gain, so much as what they brought away. The slave trade was at this time perhaps the most advantageous traffic carried on in this part of the Mediterranean, where our scene of action lay so near; therefore it was no sooner known in Cairo that a fresh cargo of slaves had arrived, than an inspection took place by the viceroy's officers, in precedence of all others, and the handsomest females selected for the harem of the grand sultan at Constantinople, or reserved for the chief officers of the empire: but this last was a dangerous hazard to risk; if the slave purchased happened to be beautiful, or particularly attractive,

and such a fact came to the knowledge of the sultan, that one of his officers, of whatsoever rank, dared to keep back any piece of superior flesh and blood, it is a thousand chances to one he would very soon receive a polite request from his master, desiring him to send back his head by the bearer, without delay, to answer for the offence.

It is well known the Turks, although blessed with one of the most prolific (that is to say, the greatest part) gardens of nature under the sun, are so naturally indolent, that every poor devil, who can scarcely keep himself, will have his slave; no wonder then, in such a part, that this human scandal should be carried on to such an excess.

The vessel that bore the slave of whom we are about to speak, was a Spanish one, and heavy laden with unfortunate creatures of both sexes: these were taken out, and separated about two miles below the town, on the river, previously to their

being brought to the market-place at Bulac.

This practice we suppose is followed by the inhuman traders, to prevent the public world witnessing the heart-rending and appalling scenes that then take place; fathers torn for ever from their daughters, mothers from their sons, brothers from sisters, wives from husbands, and lovers from mistresses. This last, it should appear, was the class in which the unfortunate Sadak (for such was his name) stood at the time of his cruel separation. Often in frantic despair would a dozen or more of these disgraced human beings, when linked together like dogs, dart from the vessel's side, and prefer a premature grave, rather than endure a separation, or the wretchedness of slavery. Sadak was a superior being, and highly valued by the dealer in blood, who had him for sale, and offered him as horse-dealers do in England, when they shew their cattle out to the best advantage, by whipping and putting them

on their metal. In this manner was Sadak exasperated by the cruelty of his salesman, that he might prove his strength and agility, purposely to enhance his value. Thus was he called by captain Tabel refractory, and when first purchased by Conrod, and he found himself released from his former master, who tore him from his native land, his home, and all that made life dear to him, the first act he did, when in possession of his new master, was to pounce like an angry tiger on the late despoiler of his happiness, and but for the interposition of the by-standers, would soon have ridded the world of a villain.

It further appeared on his sale, by way of recommendation, that in his own country he was a person of some consequence; it was now to be seen he was young, handsome, full of the fire of manhood and spirit of health; with all these qualifications he became the property of the caliph Elmuton, purchased by Conrod, and by him conveyed from the market to the gar-

dens of the castle, with a sort of self-gratification at his superior judgment in human dealings.

Sadak was no sooner brought to the place of his destination, with the horrid prospect before him that it was to be for ever his future residence of misery, labour, and bitterness of wo—a place where no gleam of hope shed its cheering rays to calm the anguish of his burthened and overwhelmed bosom; no solace was here to be anticipated to chase away his despondency—no friend to partake his cares and sooth his sorrows; his vigour forsook him, his boasted courage fled, and he yielded to despair. The wretched abode that now sheltered him was inhabited by beings whose general appearance bespoke slavery, with all her concomitant attendants. He was gazed at by some with an eager curiosity, by others the eye of pity surveyed, as the parched and tearless organ would fain have dropped the precious balm of sympathy and commiseration;

others, unnoticing aught that was passing, seemed buried within themselves, and lost in rumination; some few had thrown themselves full length on their straw mattresses, courting the blessedness of sleep, to refresh their wearied limbs, and hush for a moment their anguished minds into forgetfulness; but, alas! to awake with stiffened joints, and a bosom racked with anticipating fresh tortures and renewed misery.

This suspension of labour was allowed for about two hours, to those that toiled in the overwhelming heat, and out-of-doors service. The time had again returned to renew their task; a shrill whistle from one in office was the signal for stirring; with trembling and fear was it obeyed—some, whose fate had hardened their minds to almost desperation, with execrations and blasphemy poured forth a torrent of abuse on every thing mortal and divine, that made even the Pagan soul of Sadak shudder with horror.

Next his turn came to enter on his new life—no, existence—of hard and cruel servitude—servitude that made wretchedness wretched, by the hard-heartedness of wicked and weak men, clothed with unlicensed authority. Sadak was still habited, in part, in the costume of his country, and that of a superior sort in some points. An ornamented skin of the leopard hung across his shoulders, while the more tender fawn's girded his loins, and reached to his knees; a small but curiously-wrought cap partly covered his head; a string of highly-polished shells were suspended around his neck, all of which trapping he was sourly and peremptorily commanded to strip off, and cover his person with a coarse sort of hempen shirt that reached to his knees, when the waist was tied close with a stubborn leathern thong, and a brass ring or collar rivetted on his fine neck. Thus equipped, he was conducted to his labour; this was to clear a kind of reservoir at the bottom of a most beautiful avenue, leading

past the front of the "vestibule of the waters," and which had been for some time much neglected; but the penetration of captain Tabel foresaw new pleasures, and multiplied pastimes and diversions, from the accession of the lovely Zoa to the caliph's love, and had in consequence given orders for all places to be put into requisition.

At this spot was the unhappy Sadak toiling one morning, when a bell was rung, as a warning for all male slaves to quit the boundaries of the garden of the harem, that the females of the viceroy's seraglio might take the air in the shady walks, or amuse themselves in the cool retreats with which this enchanting place abounded, without having their recreations or persons looked upon by forbidden eyes. The sound of the bell aroused him from his labours; he threw down the implement with which he was working, and addressed the sun with the following prayer or ejaculation:—

"Oh, glorious, heavenly, sacred orb!
The great Omnipotence hath sent to cheer
The earth, and give to man its timely fruits—
How fondly once I lov'd to look on thee!
When thy rising beckoned me to bliss,
And thy setting lull'd me in calm repose:
Or, when to cheat thee of thy sultry heat,
Would steal to fragrant groves, and vow out there
The tender sweet delight of heartfelt love.
But now no solace here; thy rays so mock
And fester my mind, as well as body,
That, but for nature, I could cry, 'I hate thee!'
Oh, where art thou my soul still fondly lov'st?
Art burning now beneath this torrid heat,
Or toiling hard in earth's embowel'd damp?
Perhaps some ruffian clasps thee in his arms,
Who knows not how to value charms like thine!
That thought but maddens me! give winds thy sighs,
That on their wings may ride the horrid sound,
And let me storm revenge to ease my heart!
If thou'rt in happier mood, then kiss the breeze,
And let me quaff the ambrosial draught;
Or if thou'rt dead, let me be so inspir'd,
To trace in heaven thy bright planet out,
And sigh my love and adoration there!"

As he finished this sort of apotheosis, with his hands and arms folded far over his bosom, and his countenance full towards the heavens, again were his ears struck by the second signal of the bell.

He looked toward the part from whence the sound proceeded, and with a tone that foreboded the treatment he endured was making rapid strides to turn his better feelings callous, he exclaimed—" Fools—fools that you are! sound out—sound louder, thou empty, boasting thing! to me thou art like the voice of thy master—loud, boisterous, and threatening. Oh, this makes slavery doubly degrading, when thus at the mere sounding of a bell, one man, made, fashioned, and formed by the same Creator, must turn his face away, and look not where his fellow-creature walks! No," he continued, with much fervency—" no, by yon glorious sun, I will not stir! My life is not worth my keeping, and this may be my last—my funeral knell!"

He then turned, and was about to take the path of the avenue, when he was accosted by Tabel, in all the authority of his office and a voice of consequence—" How now, base slave! art thou deaf or wouldst

thou not hear that bell, that warns all intruders off? The great caliph Elmuton, or his ladies, will walk here anon at these hours; this part is held sacred to them alone; come, hence away, or thy life may answer for thy intrusion."

Sadak eyed him for a moment; then with a contemptuous tone replied—"My life, saidst thou, Turk!—ha, ha, ha! take my life—it is not worth my keeping! I had rather give it up, than hold it thus; for worse than beasts you look upon us here; your very dog it is your practice to fondle and to pamper, and lest the heat his burthening fat should melt, you take him in your arms for rest, and cry, 'poor thing!' and with your garments shelter him; while we, your fellow-men, dare scarcely breathe."

At this unexpected language from a slave, the ladies' little gentleman seemed quite put out. He looked at him from top to toe; then leaning on his walking-staff, and taking a wonderful long draught

of smoke from his pipe, and issuing it out by degrees again from the corner of his large mouth, which operation being over, he answered—"What was that you said, slave, hey?—fellow-men! come, come, you will not mend that speech this day—fellow-men indeed! Heathens, savages, Pagans all! that we enlightened, favoured descendants of the prophet, take so much pains to teach you labour, feed you, and by various other means convince you that you are flesh and blood, or you would scarcely have reason enough to find it out."

At this inhuman degradation, a crimson flush overspread the sunburnt features of the manly Sadak; his breast heaved—he almost panted with disgust, and at the same time darted such a look on the dwarf as made him tremble for his safety. Sadak was an entire stranger slave to Tabel, at least he had but casually seen him, when he made a disturbance in the market on the first morning of his arrival; and now that his dress was altered, all re-

collection of him whatever was erased from the memory of the officer, who plainly saw he was evidently unused to the practices and observances of the castle; and when he observed the angry look of Sadak, he knew not what to say; he cast a kind of under look around; but saw no one near at hand to call for assistance, in case this heathen Pagan should offer any molestation to him. To unsay what he had uttered would never do, or to attempt an argument with one so low, was worse than the loss of office. His pipe was gone out rather unexpectedly; that served to engage him most opportunely; he drew, and blowed, stopped the ashes with the end of his finger, then drew again. Sadak saw his embarrassment, and spoke thus—

"Thou wonderous beauty of creation, pierce thou this blistered bosom! scan it well—its produce will like thine be crimson blood! tear this beating heart from its fibrous seat, I think it would on comparison be much like thine in shape and make."

During this, Tabel had in some measure overcome his embarrassment, and replied —"How now, slave—how is this? How long hast thou been with us, that thou hast so much reason got?"

Sadak again surveyed him with much indignation, and answered—"How long with thee! not long enough to be by thee corrupted, nor long enough to forget what I am, or what I have been! Tell me, Turk, didst thou ever love, or were thy parents to thee ever dear? if so, thou wilt see the picture I shall draw.—Ere I was torn from my home, my country, my all, I was the support, the comfort of decrepit, aged parents—their every care and every joy—their only offspring, and their only solace for decaying age. Witness yon glorious sun, I was their all, their every thing, till thy fell avarice tore me inhumanly from their arms!"

The distress of mind in the wretched slave at this part of his recital, almost choked his utterance, and made a visible

impression on the feelings of the dwarf, who, with a soothing sort of voice, said—"Say not so, good fellow; I am but a slave in office; few that make freedom their boast are much higher; it is but the authority they are decked withal that makes their state the easier borne."

Sadak was on a theme the most distressing to his mind; yet to give vent to his troubles, and pour them into the ear of another, seemed to give him relief; he therefore continued—"Ere the sun the towering hills would cap, or dews ascended from the lower dales, our active youths would hail me as their prince of chase; and when to Hyperion had our daily homage paid, I was always foremost seen to lead the happy and contented band; and when returned, in the evening's shade, recount to her I loved our day's hard toil and perils; and playful in our love, from the gaudy macaw's plume, would dizen her flowing hair—from the sea shore gather shells to deck her breast; in our

dance, her light-flowing vest in the zephyrs played; in the song, her melodious voice infused joy around, as distant echoes answered to our bliss. While living thus, in all the life of love, no dreary thoughts or gloom to bend our brows, our hearts fast knitted with heavenly union, such as your hardened bosoms can never witness —while leading thus a life in paradise, a band of fierce and ruthless villains seized us, and to your hellish climes conveyed us, miserable slaves, to drag a life of bitterness and wo!"

Tabel expressed much attention and commiseration in his manner as Sadak proceeded with his narrative; and when he had finished, a short silence followed. After a time, the dwarf informed him of the authority he held under the caliph, and recommended him to do his duty with becoming behaviour; and as his address was so far above his companions in bondage, in time, with his influence, his hardships might be alleviated in a great mea-

sure, by advancement to some place or situation better adapted to one of his capacity.

Now was heard the bell, announcing the third and last signal for the gates and avenues to be closed. The little officer pointed to a portal, the only one now remaining in the gardens unclosed, and bade Sadak take his departure there; and the first opportunity that offered, he would not be unmindful of the promise he had given him. By thus saying, the dwarf supposed he had entirely quenched the flame of indignation he had raised in the mind of the Pagan. With a kind of condescending acknowledgment of the head, he left him, and turned back by the path from which he made his first appearance.

Sadak remained fixed in a kind of stupor, from which he was aroused by the loud crash produced by closing the entrance pointed out by Tabel. Thus was he precluded from flying the forbidden sanctuary, and an accumulation of danger

buckled on his fate; raising himself full erect, and taking an undaunted survey around him, like a victim was he hurdled in, and compelled to hazard the consequences. Again he gazed directly on the heavens, and thus delivered his thoughts —" Oh, glorious deity of light! why should I wish to stir!—no, here will I stand and brave the tyrant storm! If one should be bold enough to raise a sword against my wretched life, then will I try who has the strongest arm, the dark, unenlightened Pagan, or him who boasts of his superior intellectuality and knowledge of the divine arcanum; for ere I fall by the hands of these proud freemen, shall they sorely feel the revenge of one they have thus disgraced and enslaved!" He then retired to an alcove that stood by, and threw himself in despondency, half reclining on the mattress that was within.

END OF VOL. I.

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